

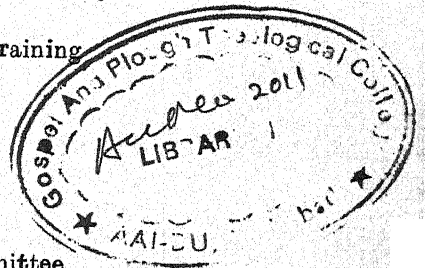
CORINTHIAN COLUMN

Answers to Church Problems

[A Book Study of I Corinthians]



A Course in the Department of Bible Analysis
of the
Leadership Instruction and Training
Curriculum



Published by the LIT Committee
for
LANDOUR BIBLE INSTITUTE
Mussoorie, U. P., India

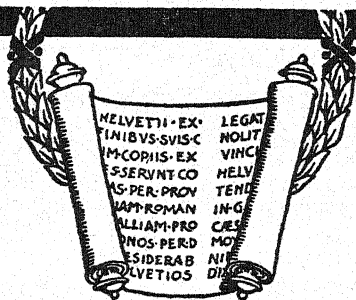
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The art work illustrating the text was prepared by Mr. John Ayers and Mr. B. Newton.

The typing of manuscripts and the arduous task of proof reading were performed by Mrs. Paul C. Haagen.

Christian leaders of many denominations read portions of the manuscript and made valuable suggestions.

The Landour Bible Institute extends grateful thanks to all these who have contributed freely of their time to make ANSWERS TO CHURCH PROBLEMS a reality.

Preface

INTRODUCING LIT

LIT is an acronym for Leadership Instruction and Training. It is a curriculum of Bible studies especially written for laymen who wish to prepare themselves for service and leadership in the local church. At this printing there are several hundred students actively engaged in LIT studies. CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS is the prerequisite course in this training programme. All texts are written:

1. In a readable style
2. On a scholarly basis
3. In progressive steps
4. In a systematic form
5. With full coverage
6. At a reasonable price

LIT courses may be purchased and studied independently of the LIT office. On the other hand, the LIT office provides counselling and grading:

1. For those submitting examinations of individually selected courses.
2. For those enrolled in the LIT degree programme.

LIT will give a L.I.T. (Licentiate in Theology) degree to students who have successfully completed:

1. Sixty course credits
2. Assigned reading
3. Remedial assignments
4. A supervised comprehensive examination

Finally, let us see what LIT is *not* as well as what it is:

1. LIT is *not* another series of simple correspondence courses.

LIT is an advanced Home Study Course in Christian education.

2. LIT is *not* a "degree mill" where anyone can get recognition cheaply.

LIT is a comprehensive course requiring years of hard work.

3. LIT is *not* a hasty effort to fill a temporary need.

LIT is the result of years of experience and research in the field of Christian education. Its curriculum embodies the cooperative efforts of many Bible scholars.

4. LIT is *not* a substitute for seminary education.

LIT is a training facility through which laymen can prepare themselves for ministry in their local churches. LIT prepares candidates for study at the seminary level.

For specific answers to your questions regarding LIT, write to:

LIT
Firland Hall
Mussoorie, U.P.

Abbreviations Used In This Text

a...first phrase of verse only
A.V...Authorised Version
A.D...Anno Domini; in the year of our Lord
A.S.V...American Standard Revised Version
b...second phrase of verse only
B.C....before the birth of Christ
c...third phrase of verse only
cf.compare
C.F.....CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS
chap...chapter
conc...concerning
concl....conclusion
d...fourth phrase of verse only
e.g...for example
ep...epistle
esp...especially
etc...and so forth
f, ff...the following verse, verses
Gk...Greek

Heb...Hebrew
i.e...that is
Intro...introduction
lit. trans...literal translation
LXX...Septuagint
misc...miscellaneous
N.E.B...The New English Bible (1961)
N.T...New Testament
O.T...Old Testament
p., pp...page, pages
Phillips...J. B. Phillips trans. of New Testament
prob...probably
R.S.V...Revised Standard Version (1952)
R.V....Revised Version (1885)
T.E.V...Good News for Modern Man: The N. T.
in Today's English Version (1966)
v., vs...verse, verses
viz....namely
&...and

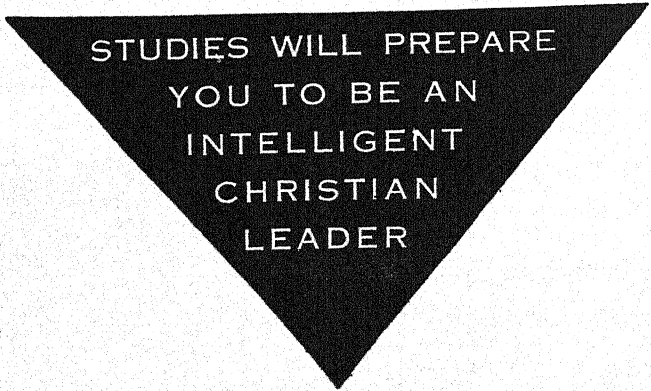
Abbreviations of the Books of the Bible: See C. F. p. vii.

Errata

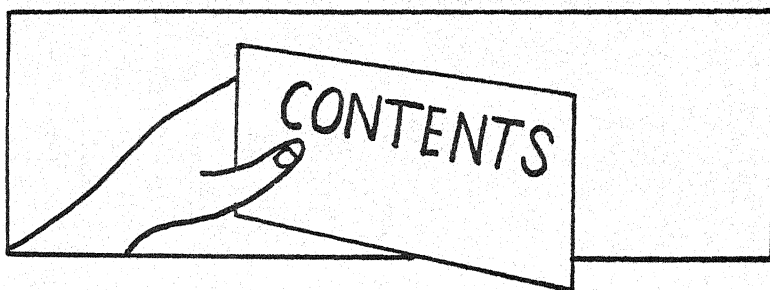
Make the following corrections in your own copy of the text:

Location:	Printed :	Should read:
Page 9 line 17	proconsul	proconsul
Page 56 lines 12 & 17	IV. A 2; IV. A 1	IV. A 1; IV. A 2
Page 73 line 27	7: 39, 43	7:39, 40
Page 90 line 11	answer	answers
Page 94 line 12	neighbours	neighbours'
Page 95 line 4	sensitive	sensitive
Page 111 line 28	19:14-22	10: 14-22
Page 148 line 28	VIII. D 1	VIII. E 1
Page 168 line 7	I Peter 22:30	I Peter 2: 30
Page 172 line 26	IX. B 2	IX. B 25
Page 258 line 10	circumstance	circumstances
Page 266 line 18	II. B 2	II. B 3
Page 268 line 19	V. C 4	V. C 5
Page 269 line 35	RUNNER THE PRIZE	RUNNER AND THE PRIZE
Page 269 line 36	BOXER DISQUALIFICATION	BOXER AND DISQUALIFICATION
Page 273 line 14	13:13	13:1-3
Page 273 line 35	IX. A 18	IX. B 18
Page 274 line 5	IX. A 1	X. A 1
Page 274 line 6	X. A 3	X. A 2
Page 274 line 21	Prophecy Edifies	Prophecy Exercises
Page 275 line 8	14:39-40	14:36-38
Page 275 line 9	14:36-38	14:39, 40
Page 275 line 26	Unreasonable	Unreasonable
Page 276 line 1	(e)	(2)

LIT



STUDIES WILL PREPARE
YOU TO BE AN
INTELLIGENT
CHRISTIAN
LEADER



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The Model Student

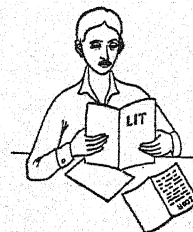
1. The model student prays before he begins his study.



2. The model student reads the entire Scripture passage before he studies the text.



3. The model student reads and rereads the lesson material thoroughly and thoughtfully.



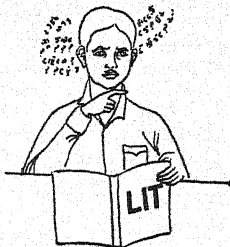
4. The model student completes the EXERCISES and evaluates his own comprehension of the lesson.

EXERCISES

Circle the "A," "B," "C," or "D" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. What incorrect preference of the Corinthians led Paul to write I Corinthians 14:29? They preferred to sit at the back of the assembly. b) They preferred to hold their services on Sunday rather than Sunday. c) They preferred the gift of prophecy to all other gifts. d) They preferred the gift of tongues to the gift of prophecy. (X. Intro.)
2. What is the literal meaning of the word "tongues" used in chapter fourteen? a) The movable flesh in the mouth used for talking. b) A peculiar mannerism in speaking. c) A lot of fluff such as appeared over each temple at Pentecost. d) A dialect or language. i. e. rational speech. (X. A 1)
3. In the Greek language, the word prophecy means a) prediction. b) inspiration. c) foretelling the future. d) forth-telling or proclaiming. (X. A 1)

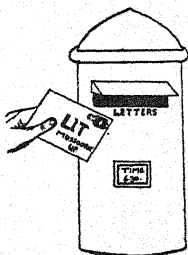
5. The model student revises the lesson with special attention to those sections explaining questions he answered incorrectly.



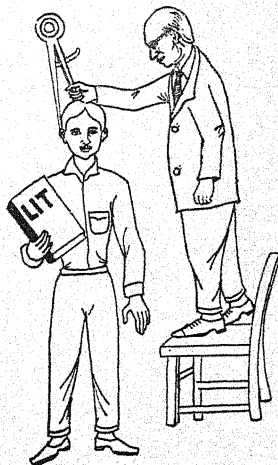
6. The model student writes his EXAMINATION at one sitting.

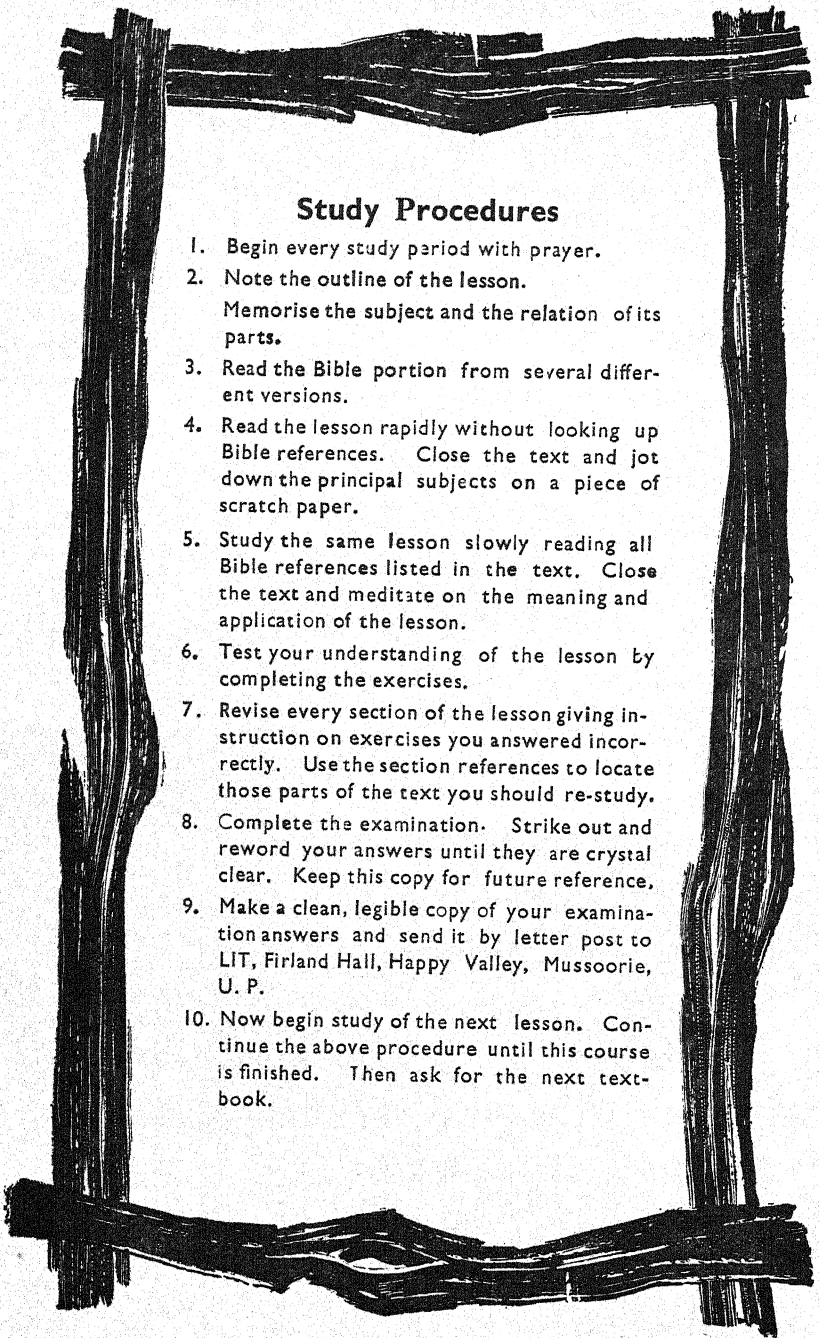


7. The model student makes a legible copy of his EXAMINATION and posts it to the LIT office by first class post.



8. LIT officials record and acknowledge the excellent calibre of the model student.
- ARE YOU A MODEL STUDENT ?
- YOU CAN BE !
- Turn to the next page and read how you too can become a model student.





Study Procedures

1. Begin every study period with prayer.
2. Note the outline of the lesson.
Memorise the subject and the relation of its parts.
3. Read the Bible portion from several different versions.
4. Read the lesson rapidly without looking up Bible references. Close the text and jot down the principal subjects on a piece of scratch paper.
5. Study the same lesson slowly reading all Bible references listed in the text. Close the text and meditate on the meaning and application of the lesson.
6. Test your understanding of the lesson by completing the exercises.
7. Revise every section of the lesson giving instruction on exercises you answered incorrectly. Use the section references to locate those parts of the text you should re-study.
8. Complete the examination. Strike out and reword your answers until they are crystal clear. Keep this copy for future reference.
9. Make a clean, legible copy of your examination answers and send it by letter post to LIT, Firland Hall, Happy Valley, Mussoorie, U. P.
10. Now begin study of the next lesson. Continue the above procedure until this course is finished. Then ask for the next text-book.

OTHER THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS TEXT

- LESSON:** The word "LESSON" refers to the major divisions of this course.
- CHAPTER:** The word "CHAPTER" refers to the major divisions of I Corinthians.
- OUTLINE:** Each lesson begins with an outline that sets forth the different parts of the lesson and shows the relationships existing between them. Use this outline, as you would a map, to get your bearings before beginning your study-tour through the lesson. Unlike the Scriptures, it is *not* inspired, and will differ with each expositor. It will have fulfilled its purpose when it has introduced you to God's Word.
- VERSIONS:** Since most students will have the Authorised version of the Bible before them as they study, we have frequently quoted other versions in order to reveal the meaning of the original text of Scripture. Such use does not indicate a preference for the version used.
- PARENTHESES:** Explanations, section numbers, original Greek or Hebrew words, and Scriptural verifications are often placed in parentheses; e. g. Sabbath (Sunday); (X. B 13); doctrine (*did-ach-e*); (Acts 18:26). All matter within parentheses may be ignored during the first rapid reading of the text. During the second reading of the text, all Scripture references should be looked up in your Bible and read in full at the point where they are printed in the text.
- BRACKETS:** Words that do not appear in Bible portions placed in quotation marks or in the original Scriptures but are added to complete the sense of the statements in English, are enclosed in brackets; e. g. "Ye are [the] body of Christ."
- PRONUNCIATION:** The first time a difficult name appears in the text it is divided into syllables with the accented syllable indicated in order to help the student pronounce the name properly.
- EXAMINATIONS:** Examination questions require a knowledge of the Scripture references contained in this course as well as the facts stated in the textbook.
- SUBSTITUTE QUESTIONS:** When a substitute question is included in an examination, it may be answered instead of any one of the regular questions. In such a case, the number of the substitute question and its answer should be written in the place where the regular question would have been written. If the student answers both the regular and the substitute question, in their proper order, both his answers will be graded and he will be given the higher of the two marks.
- CHAPTER MARKERS:** Hold the textbook in your left hand so that it is slightly rolled into the form of a capital "C." This will cause the chapter markers to appear at the edges of the still unopened pages. By lining up any number marker in the table of contents with the chapter marker on the front edge of the text, you can turn immediately to the chapter you wish to read.

GROUP STUDY

Individual Bible study is profitable; individual study supplemented by class discussion is better. Even if you are not a trained theologian, by following the suggestions listed below and using **ANSWERS TO CHURCH PROBLEMS** as your text, you can lead a local study group, integrated with your local church programme, and relying on your pastor as adviser. It goes without saying that you should finish your own study of any course before attempting to lead group study of that course.

Christian fellowship experienced in group study of the Bible will be an encouragement to regular, purposeful, individual study at home. Such double-edged study of Scripture will "build up" the local church as individual members become adept in using "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Eph. 6:17).

HOW TO BEGIN

PRAY, asking God to guide you in this ministry.

CONSULT your local pastor, soliciting his help.

PLAN the class sessions so that they do not overlap any existing church activities.

ANNOUNCE the study programme in each church service for an entire month before beginning classes.

ORDER textbooks for each church member who plans to attend the classes and shows it by paying for his or her textbook.

ENCOURAGE each prospective student to study **LESSON ONE**, as suggested on page xii, before attending the first class session.

PREPARE for the class discussion by thorough personal study, depending upon the Holy Spirit to teach and guide you.

HOW TO CONDUCT THE CLASS

EXPECT to meet the Lord and listen to His message.

FORBID conversation while the group is gathering.

ENCOURAGE each attendant to prepare himself through silent prayer.

BEGIN each session promptly at the scheduled time.

OPEN each session with prayer.

READ the entire Scripture passage to be studied. The class (unitedly or consecutively)—not the leader—should do this reading.

POINT OUT the subject or subjects of the lesson together with their divisions, by using the lesson outline. This is a task for the leader, or someone assigned ahead of time.

WRITE DOWN the principal subjects on a blackboard or have the students refer to the outline printed at the beginning of each lesson. Proceed according to this listing of subjects and their subdivisions.

GIVE OUT each corroborating Scripture reference for the students to locate in their own Bibles and read aloud. Let individual students

volunteer to read the Scripture reference by repeating it after the leader. Discuss the meaning of each Scripture. When necessary, have different students read from different versions. Do not proceed until you are confident that each student understands the Scripture verse under discussion and the related references in other portions of the Bible.

DISCUSS each sub-section in turn after reading the Scriptures that relate to it. *Do not lecture.* Keep the discussion moving by asking leading questions that are thought-provoking. Try to draw every student into the discussion. If some members are afraid to speak without preparation, make personal assignments a week in advance, or prepare a list of questions for everyone to think about before coming to class.

SUMMARISE the class discussion by listing all the important truths on the blackboard (or by dictating them for each student to write down in a composition book). If the students have given contradictory statements, list them all for the class to consider. This is the task of the leader.

EVALUATE the statements that have been made. All will not be of the same value. Test each by related Scripture passages, by reason and by experience. Try to lead the students to decide between conflicting statements. If they are unable to do so, supply them with additional facts or Scriptures that will enable them to distinguish truth from error.

APPLY the truth learned through your study to your own local church programme and its ministry. Extend the application to the individual Christian. Remember that a Scripture passage with a single meaning may have many applications.

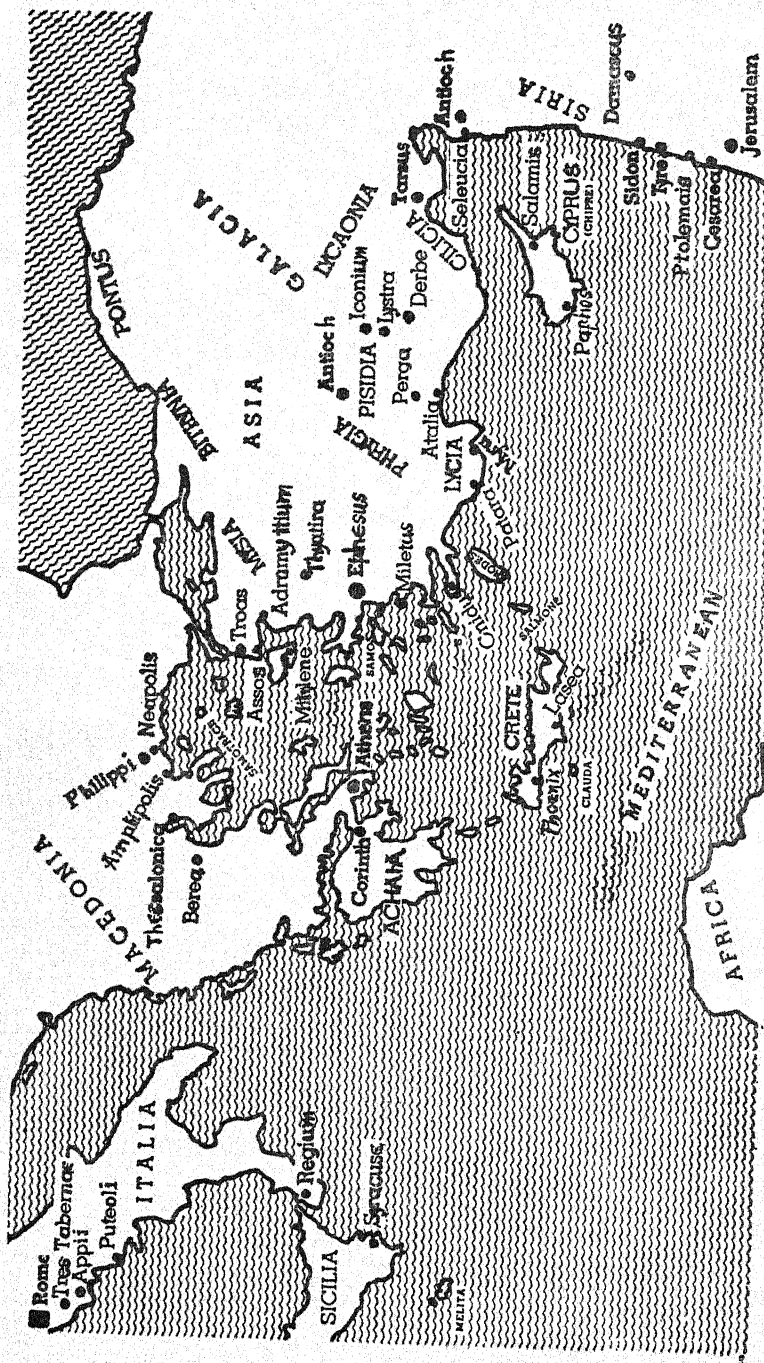
CLOSE the session promptly with prayer at the end of one hour regardless of your progress in the lesson or the interest of your students. Let eager students know they may remain after the closing prayer for further discussion or to ask personal questions.

ASSIGN additional pages in the text for study at home.

UTILISE the **EXERCISES** at the end of each lesson to assist in a review of that lesson. It will often be helpful to use these questions to stimulate discussion, to prepare for the examination, or to review previous study before proceeding to new material.

FINALLY, instruct your students to write their **EXAMINATIONS** at home and bring them to the next class session for mailing to the LIT headquarters.

And what is the leader's reward for all this effort? The faithful teacher learns *twice as much* as the most diligent student.



LESSON ONE

AN INTRODUCTION TO FIRST CORINTHIANS

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY (I. A 1)

LOCATION OF CORINTH (I. B 1)

FEATURES OF FIRST- CENTURY CORINTH (I. C 1)

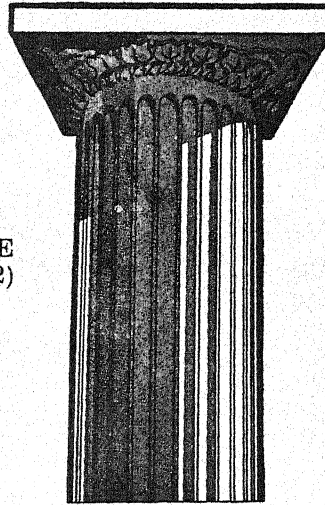
A COMMERCIAL CENTRE
(I. C 2)

A MILITARY CENTRE
(I. C 3)

AN ADMINISTRATIVE
CENTRE (I. C 4)

A RELIGIOUS CENTRE
(I. C 5)

A COSMOPOLITAN CEN-
TRE (I. C 6)



1. The Majority People (I. C 7)

2. The Minority People (I. C 8)

SUMMARY (I. C 9)

PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO CORINTH (I. D 1)

PAUL MEETS AQUILA AND PRISCILLA (I. D 2)

PAUL MINISTERS TO THE JEWS (I. D 3)

PAUL MINISTERS TO THE GENTILES (I. D 4)

PAUL WRITES TO THE THESSALONIANS (I. D 5)

PAUL'S CASE IS THROWN OUT OF COURT (I. D 6)

PAUL DEPARTS FROM CORINTH (I. D 7)

LATER DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO CORINTH (I. E 1)

PAUL VISITS CHURCHES HE FOUNDED (I. E 2)

APOLLOS LEARNS THE GOSPEL (I. E 3)

PAUL MINISTERS AT EPHEBUS (I. E 4)

PAUL RECEIVES NEWS FROM CORINTH (I. E 5)

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO CORINTH (I. F 1)

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON (I. G 1)

Do you like to receive letters?

Most likely you would not answer that question with a simple "Yes" or "No." Your answer might be: "I like getting letters from some people, but not from others." Or you may reply, "I like getting good news, but not bad."

Well, you are about to read a letter you will surely enjoy. Its contents are practical, helpful and up-to-date. It is one of those rare letters you will want to read again and again. It is the seventh book of the NEW TESTAMENT called THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDY (I. A 1)

When we read a letter addressed to someone other than ourselves, we need to know something about the writer, as well as those to whom the letter is sent. We also should know something about the times in which the letter was written. This first lesson deals with such introductory matters.

Please do two things right now as we begin our study: First, ask God to teach you by His Holy Spirit. Second, read every Scripture reference given in the lesson. If English is your second language, read these references in your mother-tongue as well as in English. By doing these things you will grasp the message of the letter more quickly.

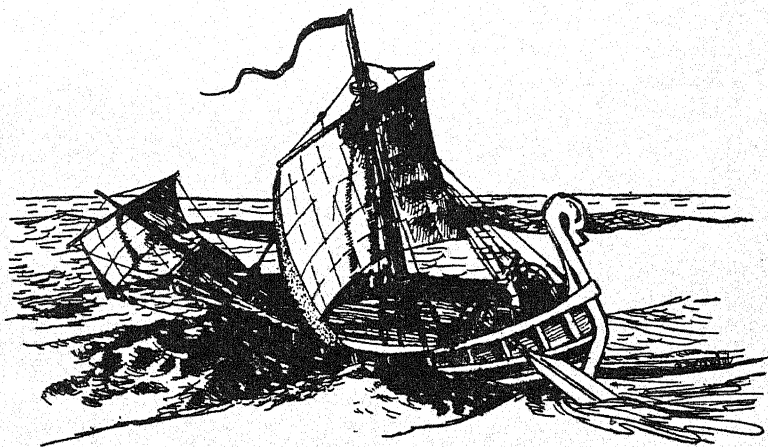
To begin with, let's learn all we can about the city of Corinth. Where was it situated? For what was it famous? How large was its population at the time Paul wrote to the Corinthians? What kind of people lived there?

LOCATION OF CORINTH (I. B 1)

Carefully study the map printed in the introductory pages. Better still, study a more detailed map in the back of a study Bible or Bible atlas. Locate the country of Greece. You will see that it lies between two seas: the A-dri-at'ic on the west and the Ae-ge'-an on the east. The Med-i-ter-ra'-ne-an Sea lies to the south. Now look at the southern part of Greece. Do you see the Gulf of Corinth (or Korinthos), an arm of the Adriatic Sea? This gulf together with the Sa-ron'-ic Gulf on the east makes the southern part of Greece (the Pel-o-pon-ne'sus) a peninsula. A narrow neck of land (an isthmus about eight miles wide) connects the peninsula with the mainland. This is the Isthmus of Corinth. The city

of Corinth stood at the foot of a rocky citadel at the south-west end of this isthmus.

First-century ships were small sailing vessels driven by the wind. When there was no wind, oars were used. In spite of their smallness, these boats sailed on long journeys. In A. D. 40 a Roman sea captain named Hip-pal'us discovered that he could go across the Arabian sea to the south Indian port of Mu-zur'is, near Cannonore. For many years spices were taken by ship and caravan from Kerala to Rome. Such travel on the open seas was dangerous. First-century seamen preferred protected waters. Those sailing the Mediterranean Sea preferred to unload their cargo and haul it across the Isthmus of Corinth rather than sail around the storm-haunted southern tip of Greece. They reached the port of Le'chae-um on the west side of the isthmus by way of the Gulf of Corinth. They reached the port of Cen'chre-a (Acts 18:18; Rom. 16:1) on the east side of the isthmus by way of the Sa-ron'ic Gulf (or Gulf of Ae-gi'na), an inlet of the Aegean Sea. Because of its location, Corinth was one of the great commercial centres of the ancient world. During the lifetime of the Apostle Paul the city contained a lakh of people.



FEATURES OF FIRST CENTURY CORINTH (I. C 1)

In addition to its good geographical location, the city of Corinth had other features that attracted people to it. At

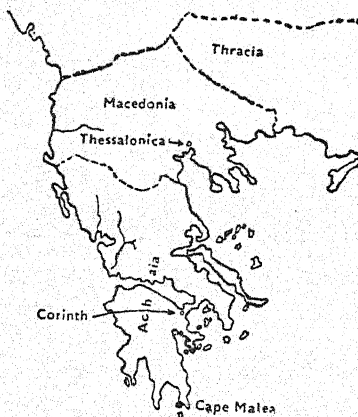
one and the same time it was a commercial, military, administrative, religious and cosmopolitan centre.

A COMMERCIAL CENTRE (I. C 2) Corinth was a big market town. Ships from the East and the West called at its ports. In fact, it commanded two of the most important commercial routes of the day: 1) the east-west sea route between what is now Asia Minor (Ephesus) and Italy (Rome); and 2) the north-south land route between northern and southern Greece. Sailors and merchants from all parts of the world came to this city. Merchandise of every kind made its bazaars the wonder of the world. By 750 B. C. Corinth had become the wealthiest city of ancient Greece. Except for two very brief periods, it maintained its economic supremacy for 1,300 years.

A MILITARY CENTRE (I. C 3) Roman soldiers rubbed shoulders with sailors and merchants in the streets of Corinth, for a large Roman garrison was stationed there. This garrison occupied a fort on the Ac-ro-cor'inth, towering 1,800 feet above the city. From this stronghold, the Roman army controlled the isthmus and the surrounding district.

AN ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE (I. C 4) Corinth was the administrative headquarters for the whole Roman province of A-cha'ia (from Cape Ma-le'a to 50 miles south of Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca); thus, it was a very important administrative centre where court sessions were held. The Roman pro-consul, who was governor as well as military commander,

resided here. Emperor Augus'tus had made Corinth the capital of the Roman province of Achaia.



MAP OF ACHAI

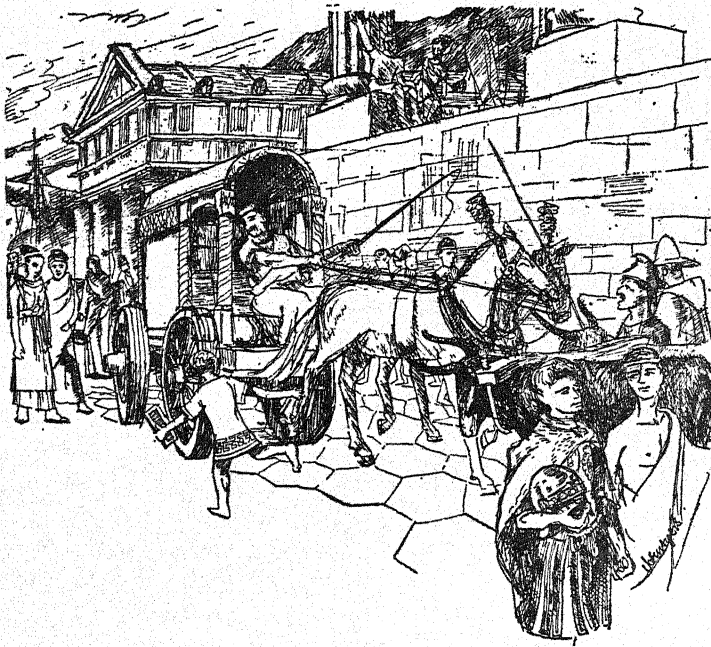
A RELIGIOUS CENTRE (I. C 5) Corinth was also a temple city. Aph-ro-di'te (also called Ve'-nus) the goddess of sexual love, was worshipped here. Her temple stood on the Acrocorinth alongside the fort that overlooked the city. A thousand priestesses lived in this tem-

ple. Their functions were much the same as priestesses of Indian temples (devadasis). At night they invaded the city to practice their trade among the ever-changing population of sailors.

A COSMOPOLITAN CENTRE (I. C 6) Men and women of all nations lived in Corinth. Although founded by the Phoe-ni'ci-ans in very ancient times, it was completely destroyed in 146 B. C. It was restored by Julius Caesar a hundred years later. Most of its inhabitants had migrated there from other Mediterranean towns. Like many Indian cities, the people belonged to different religious communities which held vastly different beliefs and moral standards; yet, as Corinthians they were both famous for their unequalled commerce and for their unequalled sin.

1. The Majority People. (I. C 7) Although the city was located in Greece, most of the people were Roman. Roman citizenship is reflected in the Latin names of Corinthian Christians who are mentioned in Scripture (Rom. 16: 21-23; Acts 18:7,8; I Cor. 16:17). The restored city (46 B. C.) was founded by a colony of Romans freed from slavery. These freedmen prospered so marvellously that their city attracted people from every part of the Mediterranean world. Everybody of any consequence went to Corinth—some to make money, others to spend it. Like the majority of people in India, most Corinthians worshipped many gods. They bowed before idols of these gods. This idol worship centred in the temple of Aphrodite and had immoral associations. This is reflected in Paul's letter. List the references in your notebook as you meet them in your study.

2. The Minority People (I. C 8) Jews made up a significant part of the population of Corinth. They based their religious beliefs on the Old Testament. Unlike their neighbours they were not idol worshippers. They had one temple where they offered sacrifices and that temple was many miles away in Jerusalem. But they had meeting houses for instruction and worship called synagogues. Here they gathered Sabbath by Sabbath (i. e. Saturday) to hear portions of the Old Testament read and explained. A council of elders ruled each synagogue. Their duties

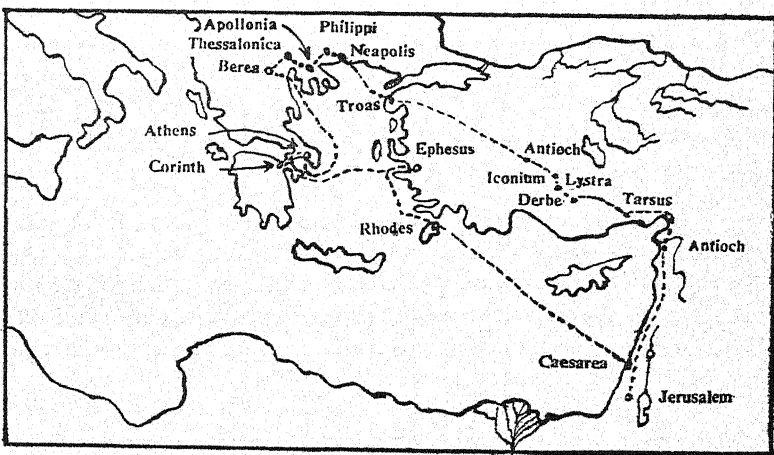


were administrative rather than religious. They did not teach the Old Testament Scriptures or lead the Sabbath worship. They arranged for qualified men to lead the Sabbath service. These dusty details are important, since the simple organization of the early Church grew out of the organization of the synagogue.

SUMMARY (I. C 9) In the first century, Corinth was a cosmopolitan centre with an outstanding market, a large garrison, an important court and a famous temple. It was a centre of art, luxury and pleasure. Moreover, it had a bad reputation due largely to the immorality of those who served the never-ending stream of visitors. Immorality was so common in Corinth that the phrase "to play the Corinthian" became the polite way to describe immoral behaviour. It was the foremost city of vice in all the Roman world. Yet, it was in this very city that God called out a large company of people for His name. Certainly, if God could work in Corinth, He is able to work wherever you and I live today.

PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO CORINTH (I. D 1)

Having set out with Silas from Antioch in Syria, the Apostle Paul visited Corinth on his second missionary journey. First, they visited the churches in southern Galatia which Paul had established on his first missionary journey (Acts 16: 1-5). They intended to limit their missionary travels to present-day Asia Minor, but when they reached the port of Tro'as, on the Aegean Sea (in present-day Turkey), Paul had a vision. In the vision a man of Mac-e-do'ni-a (the northern part of Greece) pleaded with Paul to come and help them (Acts 16:8-10). Paul and his party, which now included Luke also, crossed the Aegean Sea to Macedonia in answer to this call. They visited Phi-lip'pi, Am-hip'o-lis, Ap-pol-lo'ni-a, Thes-sa-lo-ni'ca and Be-re'a (Acts 16:11-17:16). Then Paul went alone to Athens, the cultural centre of southern Greece. Here he reasoned with the philosophers about Christ and the resurrection (Acts 17:16-34). From Athens Paul travelled to Corinth where he remained for eighteen months (Acts 18:1, 11), probably from the latter part of A. D. 50 into the early months of A. D. 52. (Indian Christians should readily remember this date, since A. D. 52 is the traditional date of the Apostle Thomas' arrival in South India.)



PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY



PAUL MEETS AQUILA AND PRISCILLA (I. D 2) The Jews had an excellent custom. Every Jewish boy learned a trade regardless of his social status. Paul learned tent making. This trade was closely linked with sail making, as carpentry is linked with blacksmith

PAUL, AQUILA & PRISCILLA work in some parts of India. While making tents and sails at Corinth, Paul met a husband and wife who worked at the same trade. Their names were Aquila and Priscilla. Paul had opportunity to teach them the Word of God as they worked together. Eventually this couple became outstanding Christians. They are mentioned six times in the New Testament (Acts 18:2; 18:18; 18:26; Rom. 16:3; I Cor. 16:19; II Tim. 4:19). Paul probably spread the Gospel in Corinth as much through his ministry to Aquila and Priscilla as by his own public preaching. The chain of witness went full circle as they instructed the fluent Apollos who later ministered in Corinth (Acts 18: 1-4,24-28).

PAUL MINISTERS TO THE JEWS IN THEIR SYNAGOGUE (I. D 3) The crucified Messiah was the theme of Paul's message. (Messiah means the Anointed One.) Through his public and private witness, Paul showed the Jews that Christ fulfilled Old Testament prophecy—that He was the Prophet-King for whom they waited. This message aroused curiosity, belief and opposition.

When disbelieving Jews would no longer listen, Paul said: "Your blood be upon your own heads" (Acts 18:6). By this he meant that they had heard the truth; responsibility now rested upon them to act according to the truth (Acts 18: 5,6). Paul now turned his attention from the minority to the majority group of people.

PAUL MINISTERS TO THE GENTILES (I. D 4) Upon leaving the synagogue, Paul continued his work in the house of Titus Justus. Even a larger group of people heard the Gospel in this Gentile home. Many Gentiles believed and

were baptized. Some Jews like Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, were baptized also. (cf. Acts 18:7-11)

PAUL WRITES TO THE THESSALONIANS (I. D 5)

Paul had a large ministry and a very busy schedule in Corinth, but he did not forget the little group of Christians left behind in Thessalonica. Paul took time to write them two letters. These are probably the first two church epistles that Paul wrote. Some scholars believe the Epistle to the Galatians (the churches at I-co'.ni-um, Lys'tra, Der'be and Antioch in Pi-sid'i-a) was written before I and II Thessalonians.

PAUL'S CASE IS THROWN OUT OF COURT (I. D 6)

The Jews living in Corinth tried to silence Paul through the government courts. However, the majority of Corinthian Gentiles disliked the Jewish community; they were ready to embrace any cause they could use against them. Gal'li-o, brother of the famous Roman statesman and philosopher—Lu'ci-us An-nae'us Sen'e-ca—and procounsul of the province, showed his contempt for the Jewish petitioners by refusing to bring Paul (the accused) to trial. Seeing an opportunity to avenge themselves on the hated Jewish minority, a Gentile mob beat their leader before they could leave the court. While all this was going on, Gallio looked the other way. (cf. Acts 18: 12-17)

This incident including the Proconsul Gallio gives us one of the few positive dates in the life of the Apostle Paul. On a stone inscription found at Del'phi, Gallio is mentioned as fulfilling a year of service as proconsul of Achaia from A. D. 51-52. Judging from Acts 18:11 and 12, Paul must have arrived in Corinth sometime during A. D. 50 and left sometime during A. D. 52.

PAUL DEPARTS FROM CORINTH (I. D 7). Some time afterwards, Paul sailed from Cenchrea across the Aegean Sea. Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him as far as Ephesus. (cf. Acts 18:18-21)

LATER DEVELOPMENTS RELATING TO CORINTH (I. E 1)

To understand later happenings at Corinth, we must trace the ministry of the Apostle Paul and others who contributed to the growth of the church in Corinth.

PAUL REVISITS HIS CHURCHES (I. E 2) Paul left Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus in present-day Asia Minor (Acts 18:19-21) and sailed to Caes-a-re'a in Palestine (Acts 18:22). After a brief stay in Jerusalem, Paul returned to Antioch in Syria, the town from which he began his first missionary tour. From there he again visited churches in the provinces of Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23). Please locate all these places on the map in the introductory pages.

APOLLOS LEARNS THE GOSPEL (I. E 3) Meanwhile, a Jewish orator named A-pol'los came to Ephesus. He was from the large, well-educated Jewish community in Alexandria, Egypt. The Old Testament had been translated from Hebrew into Greek in this cultural centre. Apollos had a good knowledge of the Old Testament and was a captivating speaker. He knew about Jesus, but administered the baptism of John (the baptism of repentance) rather than Christian baptism (death to sin and resurrection to spiritual life by faith in Christ). You will remember Paul later met others in Ephesus who had the same limited knowledge (Acts 19:1-7). Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos preach in the synagogue. They invited him to their home and explained the truth more fully. Apollos readily accepted the truth presented to him. Later, he went to Corinth where he became a leader and teacher in the church (Acts 18:24-28). Even during his absence from Corinth, Paul was ministering indirectly to the Corinthian church through this convert of his own converts, Aquila and Priscilla.

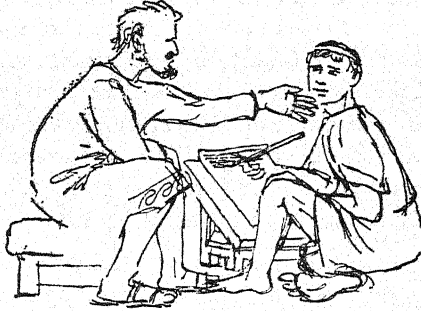
PAUL MINISTERS AT EPHEBUS (I. E 4) While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul returned to Ephesus. He remained about three years. During the first three months he preached in the synagogue; then, for the remainder of his stay in Ephesus, he held daily discussions in the lecture hall of Ty-ran'nus (Acts 19:9).

PAUL RECEIVES NEWS FROM CORINTH (I. E 5) While in Ephesus, Paul heard reports of conditions in Corinth. Members of the household of Chlo'e (evidently a wealthy Christian lady of Corinth) told Paul that party-spirit was developing in the Corinthian church (I Cor. 1:11). Also, they reported that a man living in open sin enjoyed the full fellowship of the church (I Cor. 5:1). Since there was no

public postal service in those days, three members of the Corinthian church—Steph'a-nas, For-tu-na'tus, and A-cha'i-cus—brought an official letter from the church to Paul. This letter contained questions about Christian life and doctrine. The three men who delivered the letter also gave Paul up-to-date news about conditions in the church at Corinth. The epistle we call I Corinthians was Paul's answer.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS (I. F 1)

Evidently, the First Epistle to the Corinthians was not actually the first letter Paul wrote to them (I Cor. 5: 9), but it is Paul's first letter to the Corinthians that God has preserved for us. It was probably written in A. D. 54, about two years after Paul left Corinth.



PAUL DICTATING LETTER

This Epistle contains two main parts: 1) Paul's comment on conditions in Corinth; and 2) Paul's answers to questions sent him from Corinth. Like any other letter, it also has an introduction and a conclusion. These are the four easily recognised divisions of the Epistle. We list them below in outline form with their principal subdivisions:

I. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS (1:1-9)

II. COMMENTS ON CONDITIONS IN CORINTH (1:10-6:20)

**PARTY STRIFE: ITS CAUSE AND CURE
(1:10-4:21)**

DISCIPLINE (5:1-13)

LITIGATION AND ETHICS (6:1-20)

III. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FROM CORINTH (7:1-16:9)

**CELIBACY, MARRIAGE, DIVORCE & SERVICE
(7:1-40)**

IDOLATRY & CHRISTIAN LIBERTY (8:1-11:1)

HEADSHIPS (11:2-16)

THE LORD'S SUPPER (11:17-34)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS & THEIR USE (12:1-14:40)

THE RESURRECTION (15: 1-58)

THE COLLECTION (16: 1-9)

IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS (16:10-24)

Before beginning our section-by-section study of this Epistle, I want you to read it at one sitting. Read rapidly, but note the parts listed in the outline above. Be sure to read all Scripture in your mother tongue as well as in English.

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON (I. G 1)

Let us quickly revise the main things we have learned. In the first century, Corinth was the most important commercial metropolis on the Mediterranean Sea. It was also an administrative, military and religious centre. It was populous and cosmopolitan with a great number of Romans and Greeks and a lesser number of Jews. Throughout the Roman world it was known for its immorality.

Paul first visited Corinth during his second missionary journey. He preached to both Jews and Gentiles with the result that a few Jews and many Gentiles were converted. It was here that Paul first met Aquila and Priscilla. He went with them to Ephesus, leaving them while he visited other churches. During Paul's absence, Aquila and Priscilla instructed Apollos in the Christian faith. Afterwards, Apollos went to Corinth and ministered effectively to the Christians there.

When he returned to Ephesus, Paul heard of unspiritual conditions in the church at Corinth. Party-strife and immoral conduct threatened to undermine the spiritual life of the church. Sometime later, three men brought Paul a letter from Corinth. "The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians" is the answer Paul wrote to set matters right.

Overleaf you will find two test papers. The first is for self-examination. If you make mistakes in this examination, go back and study the lesson again, especially those sections from which the questions you answered incorrectly were taken. When you get all the answers right, you are ready for the written examination of this lesson. Write your answers thoughtfully and thoroughly; then recopy them on foolscap paper and post them by first class mail to

LIT, Firland Hall, Happy Valley, Mussoorie, U. P.

EXERCISES

Each of the statements below may be completed in any one of four different ways, but only one of the completions is correct. Determine the correct completion and circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" that immediately precedes it. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. Have you read the First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians in its entirety? a) Yes! b) No! (If your answer is "No" please read the epistle before proceeding further with these exercises).
2. If you were shown a map of Europe, could you locate the city of Corinth? a) Yes! b) No! (If your answer is "No," please study the map in the introductory pages before proceeding.)
3. Corinth was the headquarters of the Roman province of a) Galatia; b) Asia; c) Macedonia; d) Achaia. (I. C. 4)
4. The large temple at Corinth was dedicated to a) Shiva; b) Jehovah; c) Aphrodite; d) the Roman emperor. (I. C 5)
5. The Corinth Paul knew was founded by a) the Phoenicians; b) the Spartans; c) Alexander the Great; d) Julius Caesar. (I. C 6)
6. The majority people in Corinth were a) nominal Christians; b) Roman and Greek pagans; c) Muslims; d) Jews. (I. C 7)
7. A Jewish religious meeting house outside of Jerusalem is called a) a church; b) a mosque; c) a temple; d) a synagogue. (I. C 8)
8. The Sabbath is a) Sunday; b) Saturday; c) Friday; d) a special Jewish holiday. (I. C 8)
9. "To play the Corinthian" means a) to play a ten-stringed instrument; b) to be expert in trade; c) to be immoral; d) to be an actor. (I. C 9)
10. A "freedman" was a) a slave who had been set free; b) a man born free; c) an enlightened man; d) a member of a secret organisation. (I. C 7)
11. Paul first visited Corinth on a) his first missionary journey b) his second missionary journey; c) his third missionary journey; d) his voyage to Rome. (I. D 1)

12. In Paul's day the population of Corinth was about a) 1,000; b) 10,000. c) 1,00,000; d) 10,00,000. (I. B 1)
13. On his first visit Paul remained in Corinth for a) three months; b) one year; c) eighteen months; d) two years. (I. D 1)
14. With what date can we associate the Apostle Paul's visit in Corinth? a) The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, 70 A. D.; b) The traditional date of the arrival of the Apostle Thomas in South India, 52 A. D.; c) The martyrdom of James, 44 A. D.; d) The burning of Rome, 64 A. D. (I. D 1)
15. Paul supported himself by following the trade of a) a blacksmith; b) a carpenter; c) a tentmaker; d) a tanner. (I.D 2)
16. When speaking in the synagogue to Jews, Paul's message was a) the crucified Messiah; b) the law of Moses; c) the example of Jesus; d) the social Gospel. (I. D 3)
17. Paul wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians from a) Athens; b) Jerusalem; c) Ephesus; d) Rome. (I. E 5)
18. Paul wrote I Corinthians about two years after he left Corinth, probably in the year a) 54 A. D.; b) 64 A. D.; c) 44 A. D.; d) 29 A. D. (I. F 1)
19. Apollos came from a) Rome; b) Ephesus; c) Alexandria; d) Antioch; e) Athens. (I. E 3)
20. Corinth was well known for its a) culture; b) immorality; c) philosophy; d) military power. (I. C 9; I. G 1)

1. ?; 2. ?; 3. d; 4. c; 5. d; 6. b; 7. d; 8. b; 9. c; 10. a; 11. b;
12. c; 13. c; 14. b; 15. c; 16. a; 17. c; 18. a; 19. c; 20. b.

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson One

Ten marks will be given for each question answered correctly and adequately. If you are studying for credit, post your finished examination to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P. Those studying for a degree may be asked some questions of this examination when they sit for their monitored, comprehensive examination.

1. How did the location of Corinth make the city important?
2. How did the Temple of Aphrodite affect life in Corinth?
3. Answer the following questions with one word.
 - a) Corinth was the chief city of which Roman province?
.....
 - b) What was the official title of the chief Roman administrator?.....
 - c) Who held this position at the time Paul was in Corinth?.....
 - d) The names of two ports of Corinth were
.....and..... The
first-named port was.....of Corinth, the
second.....
4. List the four main divisions (parts) of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, as set forth in this lesson:
 - a)
 - b)
 - c)
 - d)
5. Answer with a number or a single word.
 - a) What city did Paul visit immediately before going to Corinth?.....
 - b) How long did Paul stay in Corinth the first time he visited?.....
 - c) Which of his epistles did Paul write while in Corinth?
.....and.....
 - d) Give the names of the Christian couple with whom Paul worked while in Corinth. and
.....

6. What places did Paul visit after he left Corinth? Name four of them. a).....; b).....; c); d).....
7. In what respect did Apollos have a faulty knowledge of the Christian faith?.....
Who helped him to understand things more clearly?
.....and.....
How did they do this?
8. Who brought reports of conditions in Corinth to the Apostle Paul?
a) members of the household of.; named: b); c)and d).....
Give the full name of the famous brother of the chief Roman officer of the Province of Achaia during the first ministry of the Apostle Paul in Corinth.....
9. List five subjects about which the Christians at Corinth wrote to Paul.
a)
b)
c)
d)
e)
10. Where was Paul when he wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians?.....
Why did Paul write this letter?.....
.....

Name: File No.:

Address:

Remarks:

.....
List the reference number (Example: I. A. 1) of any section you found difficult to understand.

List all words you could not understand and could not find in your dictionary.

LESSON TWO

POSITIVE FACTS ABOUT PETTY FACTIONS



CHRIST CRUCIFIED

INTRODUCTION OF THE EPISTLE 1:1-9

GREETINGS (1:1-3)

1. The Author
2. The Author's Title
3. The Compound Name
4. The Co-worker
5. The Addressee
9. The Addressee's Designation
7. The Included
8. The Benediction

THANKSGIVING (1:4-9)

1. For Past Gifts
2. For Present Gifts
3. For Future Gifts

COMMENTS ON CONDITIONS IN CORINTH

1:10-6:20

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CAUSE (1:10-3:4)

1. The Appeal for Unity
2. The Cause of Disunity
3. The Reference to Baptism
4. The Subject Matter of Preaching
5. The Display through the Church
6. The Denunciation of Mere Eloquence
7. The Wisdom of God
8. The Classes of Mankind

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CURE (3:5-4:21) (See Lesson III)

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 1:1-3:4

In your first lesson you studied background information about FIRST CORINTHIANS. In this lesson you will begin your study of the *epistle itself*. So open your Bible and read the first three chapters before you continue with this lesson.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EPISTLE 1:1-9 (II. A. 1)

The first nine verses of chapter one are introductory. The first three of these verses contain greetings; the following six verses convey Paul's customary thanksgiving. We will examine each section as it appears in the epistle.

GREETINGS 1:1-3 (II. A 2) Busy people often pay little attention to the *salutation* of a letter (i. e. the opening greeting). Many people regularly skip these words of greeting and begin reading the message itself. To do this with Paul's letter to the Corinthians would be unwise. Paul's three verses of greeting contain several important words that will help us understand the message in his letter.

1. The Author (II. A 3) The first important word in the salutation is the author's own name. "Paul" (v. 1) is the Roman form of the Hebrew name Saul. In the first century, individuals often used several forms of their name according to the language of the people among whom they were living.



For example, another apostle was some times called Peter and at other times, Cephas. Peter is the Greek form of his name and Cephas, the Hebrew or Aramaic form. Both these

names mean "stone." Now, the book of ACTS identifies Paul as the Apostle to the Gentiles. He was the founder of many Gentile churches—an ardent evangelist, outstanding theologian and devoted pastor to Gentile peoples. It is in these capacities that the Apostle identifies himself as "Paul" to the Gentile church of his founding at Corinth.

2. The Author's Title (II. A 4) The second important word in the salutation is "apostle." This title indicates that its owner is sent on a special mission. Paul called himself an apostle because God called him into His service and *sent* him forth to preach the Gospel. We will give more attention to this word "apostle" in chapter nine, where Paul defends his apostleship. Meanwhile, let us note that Paul says his apostleship is by "the will of God" (v. 1).

3. The Compound Name (II. A 5) The third important term in the salutation is the compound name "Christ Jesus" (R. S. V.). Already we have learned that the Hebrew title "Messiah" literally means "The Anointed One." The title "Christ," used by the Gospel writers to refer to Jesus, is the Greek equivalent of this long-used Hebrew concept. (cf. Jn. 1:41; 4:25)

In Old Testament times, three classes of people were anointed for the special services they performed; namely, the prophets, the priests and the kings. The title "Anointed" was sometimes applied to the holder of any of these offices (cf. I Kings 19:16). However, the title was most frequently used to refer to the king of Israel (cf. I Sam. 26:11; Ps. 89:20). The king was *the anointed* because he was *the elect or chosen of God*.

With the passage of time, King David was regarded as the ideal king of Israel. In times of difficulty and defeat, the people began to hope for another king like David, who would restore the power and prestige of Israel. But king after king failed to fulfil their longings. For this reason, many became convinced that the Messiah would appear at the end of the age. More and more they thought of him as a political leader.

Although the Apostle Paul gives Jesus the title "Christ" or "Messiah," Jesus did not publically take this title for Himself. Jesus called Himself "the Son of Man"—a title

without political connections. In Mark 14:61,62, Jesus makes it clear to His own disciples that these two titles refer to the same Person. Moreover, Jesus was not only a king like David (cf. Mt. 27:11; Lk. 1:32), but also "a priest after the order of Mel-chiz'-edec" (Heb. 5:10; cf. Jn. 17) and a prophet like Moses (Deut. 18:18; cf. Lk. 13:33; Jn. 6:14). Jesus filled all three offices and fused the three Old Testament representations of the Messiah into one Person. He fulfilled the Old Testament statements about the promised Messiah, the prophecies concerning the Suffering Servant and the foreshadowing figures relating to the Son of Man. (cf. Luke 24:44)

All the New Testament writers recognize that the Messianic office and title is linked to the deity of Jesus. They are witnesses of the fact that Jesus was "made Christ" (Acts 3:26), that is to say, He was *proved* to be the "Christ," the Anointed One, by His resurrection from the dead. (cf. Rom. 1:4; Phil. 2:9-11) The Apostle Paul has all this background in mind when he refers to the Saviour of the Corinthians, and of all mankind, as "*Christ* Jesus."

4. The Co-worker (II. A 6) The fourth word in Paul's salutation, that comes to our notice, is the name "Sos'the-nes." Paul calls him "our brother" (v. 1). This term "brother" could refer to any male believer. Actually, Paul associates this particular fellow-believer with himself as a co-worker. Who is he, and where did he come from?

The name "Sos'the-nes" occurs only twice in the New Testament—here and in Acts 18:17. The latter is part of the account of Paul's trial before the proconsul, Gallio. When the proconsul dismissed the charges made against Paul, the Greeks took advantage of the rebuff by seizing and beating Sosthenes, who had been appointed as ruler of the synagogue in the place of Cris'pus. Was this the same Sosthenes who later helped Paul to write this letter to the Corinthians? Was the Apostle Paul's accuser converted? We cannot be sure.

5. The Addressee (II. A 7) A fifth word in Paul's salutation deserves our attention. The word "church" is a translation of the Greek word *ecclesia* from which we get our English word ecclesiastical. The *ecclesia* was "a convened assembly" of individuals called out of the general community. Every

Greek and Roman city of New Testament times held these gatherings of free citizens in order to discuss public affairs. Slaves and foreigners could not attend. Luke uses this word *ecclesia* in its original sense in Acts 19:32,39 and 41.

The Apostle Paul is not using the word *ecclesia* in its original but in its derived sense. He is not addressing his message to the free citizens of Corinth called together for a political meeting, but to freed believers called together for fellowship with Christ Jesus.

Further on in this letter, we shall find instructions concerning the daily lives of these called-out residents of Corinth. Just now, let us observe two things:

- a. In the New Testament, the word "church" *never* refers to a church building. Generally, the early Christians gathered in private homes. (cf. Philemon 1:2)
- b. The English word "church" comes from an entirely different Greek word—*kuriake*. In the New Testament, this Greek word occurs twice as an adjective, meaning "belonging to the Lord." In I Corinthians 11:20, it refers to "the Lord's Supper." In Revelation 1:10, it refers to "the Lord's day."

6. The Addressee's Designation (II. A 8) The sixth important word is widely misunderstood by present-day Christians. "Saints" are *not* unusually holy people. "Saints" are those who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Just as the Apostle Paul was *called* by God to be "an apostle," so all believers are *called* to be "saints." The word "saint" has two basic ideas that should not be confused:

- a. A saint is an individual "set-apart" for God.
- b. A saint is an individual "made holy" in God's sight. The Apostle describes such individuals as "sanctified in Christ Jesus" (v. 2).

7. The Included (II. A 9) Although the Apostle Paul wrote this epistle to meet the specific needs of "saints" at Corinth, the Holy Spirit so inbreathed his words that they also meet the needs of "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 2.). We who live in twentieth

century India will find that this epistle answers our spiritual needs just as specifically and fully as those of Christians in first-century Corinth. This is because we have a common heritage through our common Lord—"both theirs and ours."

8. **The Benediction (II. A 10)** In the third verse, the Apostle Paul closes his salutation with a benediction (asking God's blessing). He requests both "grace" and "peace" for the Corinthian Christians. "Peace" was the greeting the Jews used as they met one another on the street or in the market place. It is the equivalent of the Arabic greeting, "salaam," so familiar to those of us who live in India. (cf. Jn. 20:19) "Grace," on the other hand, was the greeting used by the Gentiles. Thus, the Apostle Paul uses both the Jewish and the Gentile greeting in his salutation to the Corinthians. Note further that he puts the Gentile greeting first. This seems to indicate that more Corinthian Christians came from a Gentile rather than a Jewish background.

Finally, note that the Apostle Paul places "God our Father" and "the Lord Jesus Christ" on a level. As you read the remainder of the epistle, you will find that Paul's concept of Jesus Christ never changes.

What a wealth of teaching is set forth in these three short verses of the salutation! Read them again. Read them slowly. Read them thoughtfully. Give attention to every word. There are no unimportant words in Paul's salutation.

THANKSGIVING 1:4-9 (II. A 11) There is something very encouraging about these six verses of thanksgiving. Remember, spiritual conditions in the Corinthian church were far from ideal. Paul had just received news about some of his converts that saddened his heart. Yet, there were things for which he could thank God. It is much the same in the local churches with which you and I are associated. If we look for it, we can always find something for which we can thank God. Let us note the things connected with the saints at Corinth for which the Apostle Paul gave thanks.

1. **Thanksgiving for Past Gifts (II. A 12)** God had granted "grace" to the Corinthian Christians (v. 4). This was a grant of "unmerited favour." Each believer receives this gift from God when he accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. This gift proves that God is for us and that He has already acted

on our behalf. It is the Christian's basic reason for thanksgiving and Paul lists it as the first thing for which he is thankful. (Also note the place Paul gives to grace in his personal testimony near the end of the epistle—15:10.)

2. Thanksgiving for Present Gifts (II. A 13) The Corinthians had been saved by grace (and no one is ever saved in any other way). Having begun their Christian lives by God's gift of grace, Paul thanks God for His continuing enrichment of their lives. God was daily providing all they needed. Gifts of "speech" and "knowledge" (v. 5) are singled out for special mention. There are those among them who can minister the Word of God. No other church has been favoured above them in spiritual gifts (vs. 5, 7). God's continuing grace has been poured out in lavish manner. Paul bows his head and thanks the Lord, even though, a little later, he will take these same Christians to task for the way in which they have used God's *gifts*. The Greek word *cha-ris'ma* (plural: *cha-ris'ma-ta*) meaning an extraordinary power or gift, such as working miracles or speaking in tongues, has been taken over into the English language and will be seen in many modern theological books.

3. Thanksgiving for Future Gifts (II. A 14) Although Paul was displeased with the lives of some Corinthian Christians, he had perfect assurance that they would reach heaven. He thanks God for His own faithfulness that would not only accomplish this, but also would bring these blameable ones to a state of blamelessness (vs. 8, 9; cf. 9:27). Even the rigours of the ultimate judgment day will not impeach the man who by faith is clothed in the merits of Christ. Certainly, this is grace for which we too should thank God!

COMMENTS ON CONDITIONS IN CORINTH 1:10-6:20 (II. B 1)

After the salutations and thanksgivings of the introduction, the Apostle Paul is ready to comment on reports received concerning the Corinthian church. The second division of the epistle continues to the end of chapter six, but its first subdivision, regarding the causes of party strife, ends with 3:4. Read the entire division (1:10-6:20); then, concentrate your attention on the first subdivision (1:10-3:4).

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CAUSE 1:10-3:4 (II.B2) In continuing his letter, the Apostle Paul makes a smooth transi-

tion from the thought of fellowship in verse nine to an appeal for unity in the verses that follow.

1. **An Appeal for Unity 1:10 (II.B 3)** First, let's note the characteristics of the Apostle's appeal:

- a. Paul makes his appeal in "the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Since Christ is our Lord, all Christians ought to be united in Him.
- b. Paul appeals for all believers to "speak the same thing." This is possible when Christians subordinate their own ideas to God's message.
- c. The purpose of Paul's appeal was to get rid of divisions. Just think what this would mean! Remember that denominations had not yet developed. Each local group of Christians still formed one assembly, meeting in one place. Nevertheless, the spiritual unity of the Corinthian church was that of a garment made useless by rents and splits (*schismata*). Only as the members of this one church were of "the same mind" and of "the same judgment" would these tears be mended and the church perform its true function.

2. **The Cause Of Disunity 1:11-13 (II. B 4)** The method we use in our attempt to remedy trouble is very important. The Apostle Paul accuses the Corinthians of "contentions" (v.11), that is, of quarreling. In doing this, he bases his accusation on a source of information he is ready to disclose. He is precise. He states plainly that it was members of the household of Chlo'e who reported the strife. It was also their faithfulness and willingness to be quoted that brought blessing to the whole church at Corinth. Too often believers are fearful of becoming involved in quarreling or in retaliation. For this reason, they withhold information needed to solve church problems. If a problem is to be solved, its causes must be disclosed.

Since strife is not a fruit of the Spirit but a work of the flesh (cf. Gal. 5:20), why were there such unspiritual conditions at Corinth? Verse twelve provides the answer. The Corinthians were following leaders instead of Christ. They were like rams banging their heads together instead of feeding in the pasture provided by the Shepherd. If

they would only look to the Shepherd instead of one another, Paul knew they would prosper. Instead, these Christians were emphasizing their human preferences.

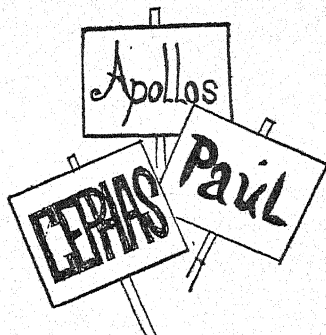
The Apostle quotes them as saying:

"I am of Paul."

"I am of Apollos."

"I am of Cephas."

"I am of Christ."



We cannot be sure exactly what these claims involved. They may have represented groups preferring an evangelistic appeal to a philosophical statement of the truth. They may have represented formalists in conflict with those who preferred a simple Gospel presentation. Again, one faction may have preferred an emotional to an intellectual appeal. Whatever the differences, they expressed them in terms of the persons who ministered to them. Such preferences are quite natural. It is their rivalry, jealousy, bitterness and pride that Paul rebukes with questions that can only be answered with an emphatic "no":

"Is Christ divided?"

"Was Paul crucified for you?"

"Were you baptized in the name of Paul?"

Since all believers belong to Christ, they naturally belong to one body. If only they would remember Who died for their sins, they would *not* give undue place to any human leader! If only they would consider the Object of their faith, they would keep Paul, and Apollos and Peter in proper perspective!

The Apostle Paul recognized the need of human leadership. He made provision for local leadership in every church he founded. In Ephesians 4:11 and 12, he lists the different kinds of leaders who should be ministering in the church: "and He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." In I Timothy 3:1-13, the Apostle sets down the qualifications necessary for the offices of bishop (vs. 1-7) and deacon (vs. 8-13). Further on in this letter

to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul admonishes them to follow him (11:1) and to submit to each minister sent by God (16:16; cf. Heb. 13:17) No, Paul is not against leadership, but against the kind of leadership that divides the body of Christ. This is evident from our present passage. By listing them in the same category as other factionalists, Paul condemns the "I-am-of-Christ" group who would deny all human leadership.

3. The Reference to Baptism 1:14-17 (II. B 5) The subject of verses fourteen through seventeen follows the last question of verse thirteen very naturally. Nevertheless, this passage is probably the most misunderstood portion of **FIRST CORINTHIANS**. From the book of Acts we learn that many Corinthians believed the Gospel and were baptized (18:8). Paul taught the necessity of baptism (Acts 19:5). Paul also followed the example of Jesus (Jn. 4:2) and the practice of the Apostle Peter (Acts 10:48) in having others do the actual baptizing in water. The very first converts would be exceptions to this general practice, since there would be no other qualified person to do the baptizing. This was the case at Corinth. Crispus, the former ruler of the synagogue (Acts 18:8), Ga'i-us, and the household of Steph'a-nas (I Cor. 16:15) were among the first converts. They were baptized by Paul, but later converts were baptized by Corinthian converts who became Christian leaders. The Apostle Paul concentrated on the work of prime importance.



This is what he means in verse seventeen when he says: "Christ sent me *not* to baptize, *but* to preach the Gospel," that is, to evangelize. Men and women are saved through the preaching of the Gospel, *not* through the ceremony of baptism. Evangelism is of greater importance than the act of baptizing, although baptism should not be neglected.

4. The Subject Matter of Preaching 1:18-25 (II. B 6) The party spirit dividing the Corinthian church arose from a

misconception of the Gospel. Accordingly, the Apostle Paul goes directly to the source of trouble in his efforts to correct the trouble. He counters untruth with truth. He sets forth the true nature of the Gospel.

Paul presented the Gospel as a divine revelation that embodied the wisdom and power of God. It gave no place to the glorifying of man. So it was sheer foolishness to contend for a Paul, Apollos or Cephas party within the church. There is only one Gospel. It is God-given and God-glorifying.

In order that this basic principle might be crystal clear, Paul avoided the display of human wisdom in his preaching. While evangelizing, he presented the Gospel and that alone. He called this basic message "the word of the cross" (v. 18 R.S.V.) or "Christ crucified" (v.23).

Paul realized that this message of the cross is "foolishness" to worldly-minded people who think they know everything. Yet, to those who accept, it is "the power" (vs. 18,24) and "the wisdom of God" (vs.21,24). By quoting from Isaiah 29:14 (v.19), the Apostle underscores the fact that this unpopular message is a Scriptural message.

Incidentally, we should note before proceeding that there are two different Greek words, with distinct meanings, which are both translated by the word "power" in the English New Testament. The word in our present text is *power* in the sense of might. We derive the English words dynamo and dynamite from this Greek word *dunamis*. The other Greek word means *power* in the sense of authority. This word is used in 9:4 and 5.

Neither the Jewish minority nor the Greek intellectuals of Corinth accepted Paul's simple but *powerful* message. Just as the Jews of Palestine asked Jesus for "signs" (Mk. 8:11-13), so the Jews of Corinth wanted Paul to give them "signs" (v. 22). On the other hand, the Greeks had a passion for philosophic discussion. They sought after "wisdom." In spite of these preferences, Paul preached "Christ crucified." This was "a stumbling-block" to the Jews (v. 23). They were looking for a victorious Messiah. A crucified Messiah seemed to be a contradiction of all they had been taught. To the Greeks, such preaching was utter "foolishness" (v.23). Yet, it was through this foolish stumbling-block that believers were actually being saved (v. 21). Believing Jews found Christ to be the power of

God—fulfilling their longing for a sign. Believing Greeks found Christ to be the wisdom of God—fulfilling their philosophic search (v. 24). W. Y. Fullerton sets forth this truth in his hymn: Christ can “satisfy the need and aspirations of East and West, of sinner and of sage.”

Let us *not* suppose Paul is suggesting in verse twenty-five that there is either “weakness” or “foolishness” in God. Rather, he *is* saying that even if such a state were possible (which it is not), God’s “weakness” would still be greater than man’s strength, and God’s “foolishness” would still be greater than man’s wisdom.

5. The Display through the Church 1:26-31 (II. B 7)
The church in Corinth was like many churches in India, in that it had few wealthy, educated or influential members (v. 26). However, we should note Paul’s words carefully. There is a great difference between not any and “not many.” Evidently Chloe was wealthy. Some other believers were from the upper strata of society. But the majority of Christians were “foolish” and “weak” in the eyes of the world (v. 27). Yet, these people had responded to the call of God, just as publicans and sinners responded to the preaching of Jesus, while scribes and Pharisees rejected His message. God uses the most common earthen vessels (v. 28), so that man can boast only of His God (vs. 29,31). To be “in Christ Jesus” (v. 30) is the matter of supreme importance. Christ is all we need. He is our salvation, and that salvation includes His gifts of “wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (v. 30). That salvation also covers three stages in time:

- a. PAST SALVATION: from the penalty of sin (i.e. justification)
- b. PRESENT SALVATION: from the power of sin (i.e. sanctification)
- c. FUTURE SALVATION: from the presence of sin (i.e. glorification)

The blessings of salvation are displayed through the church, but they come from Christ alone. If a Christian must boast, let him boast about his Lord (v. 31).

6. The Denunciation of Mere Eloquence 2:1-5 (II. B 8)
Paul had already told the Corinthians that he did not administer baptism lest recipients imagine that they had become

his followers. Now, he reminds them that even his way of preaching was chosen to turn their attention from the speaker to Christ. He insists that the party spirit at Corinth was due neither to his message nor his methods (vs. 1,2).

At a spiritual life conference, an observant layman heard sermons by two different preachers. After the first message, he commented: "What a wonderful preacher that man is"! After the message of the second minister, he said: "What a wonderful Saviour that man has"! The Apostle Paul was the second kind of preacher.

Verse three may indicate that Paul was physically unwell, or that he was spiritually distressed. In any case, the Holy Spirit used his words to bring conviction to his hearers (v. 4), so that they put their faith in Christ. This spiritual result came by the power of the Holy Spirit working through a man with observable weaknesses. (cf. II Cor. 13:4)

Thus, these five verses teach us a most important lesson. In preaching the Gospel, we must simply present the good news that Christ has died for man's sins. As we present the divine message, we must rely on divine wisdom, rather than a worldly system of knowledge that denies Christ His place of lordship. The Apostle is *not* exalting ignorance above wisdom. Rather, he is denouncing the false idea that spiritual results can be achieved by human means.

7. The Wisdom of God 2:6-13 (II. B 9) Although Paul's presentation of the Gospel was simple and unmixed with worldly wisdom, yet the Gospel itself is *not* simple. It is profound. It includes truth beyond the ability of man to discover or even understand by himself (vs. 6,7).

Let us note some of the characteristics of this divine wisdom:

- a. It can be understood only by spiritually mature Christians (v. 6).
- b. It is different from "the wisdom of this world" (v. 6).
- c. It is long-hidden wisdom (v. 7).

We should not confuse the word "mystery," in verse seven, with the so-called mysteries of a detective story. To the people of Paul's day, the word would remind them of the *mystery religions*. Mith'ra-ism was the best known of these. Its principal teachings were never made known to outsiders.

Only the initiated were taught its "truths." Some present-day secret societies follow a similar practice. In this passage, the Apostle Paul uses these well-known circumstances to explain that God kept some of His purposes from the people who lived before the incarnation. He then goes on to state that the Gospel now has made known these truths to those who put their trust in Christ. (cf. Heb. 11:39,40) The Gospel is revealed wisdom. It is beyond your understanding until made known by the Spirit of God.

Then in verse nine, the Apostle Paul restates Isaiah 64:4. These wonderful "things" are not reserved for the future, but are a part of the salvation God wrought through His only begotten Son and revealed by His Spirit (v. 10).

Just as the human spirit can discern the things of man, so the Holy Spirit knows the things of God (v. 11). When we receive the Holy Spirit into our lives, we too can understand this spiritual wisdom (v. 12) which is made known to us through the spiritual language of the Scriptures (v. 13). Thus, the Gospel is divine in its origin, and cannot be comprehended without the aid of the Divine Teacher, the Holy Spirit.

8. The Classes of Mankind 2:14-3:4 (II. B 10) You will recall from LESSON ONE that Paul wrote two letters to the Christians at Thessalonica while ministering at Corinth. The prayer he made for them (I Thes. 5:23) will serve as a starting point in understanding the words that identify the three classes of mankind Paul speaks of in this epistle. In his prayer, Paul names the three parts of man that make up his being:

- a. SPIRIT: Greek *pneuma*; Sanskrit *atma*
- b. SOUL: Greek *psyche*; Sanskrit *prana*
- c. BODY: Greek *soma*; Sanskrit *deha*

As in both Greek and Sanskrit, there is an English adjective derived from each of these three nouns:

- a. SPIRITUAL
- b. SOULISH OR NATURAL
- c. BODILY

Every human being has a spirit, a soul and a body. However, the man who has not been born again—the man who has not been quickened in spirit by the Spirit of God—is spiritually dead. His personality is dominated by his soul.

For this reason, Paul calls him a "natural man" or soulish man (2:14). Such a man cannot grasp spiritual truth.

When the Holy Spirit enters a "natural" man's life at conversion, his spirit is quickened. He begins to have a spiritual life. He becomes a "spiritual" man (v. 15). Because he is now a spiritual man, he is able to understand spiritual things. Even so, he does not lose his human nature. He is still a man with a body and a soul as well as a spirit. The New Testament calls man's soulish nature "the flesh" (cf. Gal. 5:17; Rom. 8:5,12,13). The man who has been born anew by God's Spirit can give in to his soulish nature, or he can be guided by his spiritual nature (cf. CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS II. K 1). The believer who allows himself to be controlled by his old nature—his soulish nature—is a "carnal" rather than a "spiritual" Christian (3:1). Such a man does not live up to his full spiritual potential in Christ. In exalting human leaders rather than giving Christ the place of pre-eminence, the Corinthians showed themselves to be carnal Christians. Paul further points out that carnality is a state of spiritual immaturity (3:2,4).

No one expects a baby to act like an adult. But everyone does expect a baby to grow up into an adult. One of the great joys of parenthood is to watch children develop. Parents are as pleased as the child when it learns to sit, to crawl, to walk and to talk. But how sad it is to watch a child who stops growing mentally or physically. Since God has provided for our spiritual growth, it is just as sad to observe Christians who have stopped growing spiritually. Yet, arrested spiritual development is all too common among us.

When the Apostle Paul was in Corinth, all the Christians of that city were "babes in Christ" (3:1). Since they were "in Christ" but had not yet grown to maturity, the Apostle fed them with "milk," that is "the word of the cross" (1:18). He was happy to do this, because it was the right thing to do at that time. But NOW, they ought to be mature. By NOW, they ought to be eating "meat." They ought to be applying the full meaning of the cross to their lives. Instead, they were displaying a contentious spirit that led to division. In short, their spiritual immaturity was leading them to act as ordinary men (natural men) might be expected to act. (cf. Mt. 5:4)

The Apostle Paul has made his diagnosis concerning con-

ditions in Corinth. His conclusion is this: It is your spiritual immaturity that has led you into party strife.

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 1:1-3:4 (II. C 1)

We have just begun sharing with the Corinthians the first letter the Apostle Paul wrote them. First, we noted the spiritual fullness and importance of the distinctly Christian greeting with which he opens his letter (1:1-3). Then we took note of the broadness of his thanksgiving—a thanksgiving that embraces the whole of time (1:4-9). Finally, we studied the first part of the theme with which he opens the epistle (1:10-3:4).

Conditions at Corinth are the Apostle's first concern. He accuses them of forming objectionable cliques—snobbish groups that exclude others. He also reveals the source of his information. Then, he discusses various matters that will lead them to understand the causes for their disunity and spiritual impotence. He finally sums up his diagnosis by calling their trouble spiritual immaturity.

If this brief resume does not bring the details of the lesson back to your mind, please read I Corinthians 1:1 to 3:4 again, along with the text of this lesson. Then, complete the **EXERCISES**; correct and revise them. After all this is finished, you will be ready to sit for your self-supervised **EXAMINATION** of the lesson.

May the One Who inspired the Apostle Paul to write this wonderful letter of instruction and correction, inspire you to persevere until you understand and apply it.

EXERCISES

Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. The introductory verses of I Corinthians extend from 1:1 to a) 1:3; b) 1:9; c) 1:31; d) 2:20. (II. A 1)
2. Paul became an apostle a) by his own personal choice; b) through the ordination of other apostles; c) by the will of God; d) by government edict. (II. A 4)
3. Paul called the Corinthian Christians "saints" a) because they were very holy people; b) because they had been canonized by the church council held at Jerusalem; c) because they had been sanctified; d) because he wanted to flatter them. (II. A 8)
4. Paul is thankful that God has bestowed "grace" on the Corinthians. By "grace" he means a) beauty of form; b) excellence of character; c) good sense; d) unmerited favour. (II. A 12)
5. The first theme or main division of the letter is a) about the Second Coming of Christ; b) about Paul's doctrine of baptism; c) about conditions at Corinth; d) about Paul's reasons for thanksgiving. (II. B 1; I. F 1)
6. Paul had heard from members of the household of Chloe a) that there were contentions among the Christians of Corinth; b) that everything was going smoothly; c) that the church had ceased to exist; d) that they wanted to build a house of worship. (II. B 4)
7. Paul recognized the need for human leadership in the church. We know this from a) Jn. 4:2; b) I Cor. 16:15; c) Acts 19:5; d) Eph. 4:11,12, as well as from his statements in I Cor. 1:11-13. (II. B 4)
8. The principal cause of strife and disunity at Corinth was a) unequal wealth; b) the difference between Jews and Gentiles; c) the preaching of Apollos; d) following human leaders instead of Christ. (II. B 4)
9. Paul had gone to Corinth a) to arrest Christians and turn

them over to Jewish officers for persecution; b) to baptize as many converts as possible; c) to preach the Gospel; d) to rebuke idol worshippers. (II. B 6)

10. The Greek people passionately sought after a) the Messiah; b) wisdom; c) inner peace; d) signs of God's presence and power. (II. B 6)
11. The central theme of Paul's preaching was a) the life of Christ; b) the unity of all religions; c) Christ crucified; d) the Mosaic Law. (II. B 6)
12. Paul wanted the Corinthian Christians to base their faith a) upon his system of teaching; b) upon the church creed; c) upon God's power; d) upon human reason. (II. B 8)
13. The "natural" or soulish man a) cannot understand the things of God; b) lives according to the New Testament; c) is an immature kind of Christian; d) is a man after God's own heart. (II. B 10)
14. God has revealed a) in nature; b) through philosophy; c) by His Spirit; d) through science; the things He has prepared for those who love and trust Him. (II. B 9)
15. The "spiritual" man a) has the mind of Christ; b) cannot understand the teachings of the Bible; c) is useless in God's service; d) is in contact with familiar spirits. (II. B 10)
16. Throughout their history, the Jews were constantly asking for a) laws; b) signs; c) wisdom; d) money. (II. B 6)
17. The "carnal" man is a) a churlish man; b) an immoral man; c) a person who knows the mind of the Lord; d) a Christian living on a low spiritual plane. (II. B 10)
18. The best known mystery religion of Paul's day was called, a) Paganism; b) Parsiism; c) Myticism; d) Mithraism. (II. B 6)
19. The Gospel cannot be comprehended without the aid of the Holy Spirit This is because it is a) a mystery; b) a profound intellectual subject; c) based on ancient customs and ceremonies that we no longer understand; d) the wisdom of God. (II. B 9)
20. While in Corinth, the Apostle Paul treated the Corinthians a) as babes in Christ; b) as mature Christians; c) as spiritual equals; d) as pagans. (II. B 10)

12.c; 13.a; 14.c; 15.a; 16.b; 17.d; 18.d; 19.d; 20.a.
1.b; 2.c; 3.g; 4.d; 5.g; 6.a; 7.d; 8.d; 9.c; 10.b; 11.c;

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Two

You may use your Bible and text-book in completing this examination. Quote proof texts wherever you can to give substance to your statements. Ten marks will be given for each question correctly and adequately answered. Post your finished examination by first class mail to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P., India.

1. Fill in the blanks.
 - a. Paul was especially an apostle to.....
 - b.was associated with Paul in writing this letter.
 - c. At Corinth, Paul baptized..... ,
.....and the household of
 - d. First Corinthians was written by
 - e. In saluting the Corinthians, the Apostle put Christian meaning into two common words of greeting;
they were the wordsand
2.
 - a. What is the basic meaning of the word "church" ?
 - b. What is the meaning of the word "saint" ?
3. What had Paul heard about the Church at Corinth ? Did it have to do with the teaching of false doctrine or the following of incorrect practices ?
4. State the teaching of the Apostle Paul for the Christian who says, "I am proud that I belong to Pastor so-and-so's church"!
5. What did a) the Jews and b) the Greeks think of Paul's preaching about the cross ? Give separate answers, listing them under "a" and "b."
6. What is the meaning of the word "mystery" ? Give two examples of New Testament mysteries.
7. What kind of "wisdom" did Paul teach to mature Christians ? List some of its characteristics. Who or what did Paul call "the wisdom of God" ?

8. a. What are some of the things which the Holy Spirit enables the believer to understand ?
b. Why does the unsaved man fail to appreciate the wisdom of God ?
9. What were Paul's aims in his ministry at Corinth ?
10. List the differences between the natural or soulish, the spiritual and the carnal man. What is a sure sign of carnality ?

SUBSTITUTE QUESTION

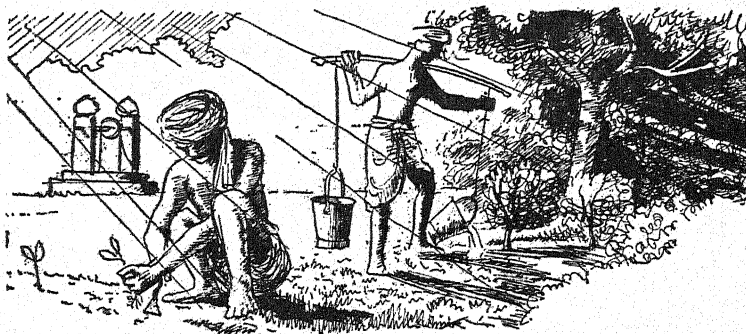
(The following question may be answered instead of any one question above. Just write the number 11 in place of the question it is to replace. Then answer question eleven instead of that question you are omitting.)

11. Does Paul's instruction in this portion of his epistle have any immediate applications to the Indian Church? If so, make those applications.



LESSON THREE

SPIRITUAL SPEECH AND CARNAL CONDUCT



"I Planted . . . Apollos Watered . . . God Gave the Increase."

COMMENTS ON CONDITIONS IN CORINTH

I:10-6:20 Con't.

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CAUSE 1:10-3:4 (See Lesson II)

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CURE 3:5-4:21

1. A Time for Work 3:5-12
 - a. GOD'S FELLOW-WORKERS
 - b. GOD'S GARDEN
 - c. GOD'S BUILDING
 - d. GOD'S PIONEERS
 - e. GOD'S FOLLOW-UP MEN
2. A Time of Testing 3:13-15
 - a. REWARDED WORK
 - b. REJECTED WORK
3. A Time for Judgment 3:16,17
4. A Time for Reappraisal 3:18-23
 - a. MINISTERS
 - b. THE WORLD
 - c. LIFE AND DEATH
 - d. THINGS PRESENT AND THINGS TO COME
 - e. ALL THINGS
5. A Time for Right Thinking 4:1-5
6. A Time for Fatherly Advice 4:6-21
 - a. ABOUT SPIRITUAL PRIDE
 - b. ABOUT SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENT
 - c. ABOUT SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 3:5-4:21

In this lesson we will continue our study of the third chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. Then we will proceed to chapter four. Begin your study by reading these two chapters in your Bible. Only then will you understand this lesson.

In chapter three, Paul continues his comments on the subject of party strife which occupied most of his attention in the preceding two chapters (II. B 1-10). Then, in chapter four we have an appendix to his discussion of cliques, which deals with personal matters. These two chapters, except for the first four verses of chapter three, are the scope of our present lesson.

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CURE 3:5-4:21 (III. A 1) In the previous section, Paul pointed out spiritual shortcomings underlying the troubles of the Corinthians. He stated that their jealousy and strife were symptoms of spiritual immaturity.

In the section before us, Paul seeks to find a remedy. He passes from diagnosis to cure. He administers the corrective by turning attention to the apostles. A true understanding of the lives and work of the apostles will show the utter nonsense of church cliques. The saints will have honours heaped upon them in the age to come, but this present life has other things in store for them.

1. A Time for Work 3:5-12 (III. A 2) The Apostle Paul had founded the church in Corinth (Acts 18:1-18). Apollos continued the work Paul had begun (Acts 18:27,28). Paul uses vivid word-pictures to explain the difference in these two kinds of service. The key that unlocks the meaning of this section is verse nine. Let us set it down in its parts and see how it divides the passage we are studying.

*WE (Paul and other true leaders) are God's fellow-workers.
YOU (believers at Corinth) are: a) God's cultivated field,
b) God's building.*

Before this pivotal verse, Paul pictures believers as a field. Following this verse, he pictures them as a building. Thus, verse nine acts as a pivot on which his discussion of the subject turns.

This ninth verse has already given us three of the five

subjects the Apostle wishes to discuss: fellow-workers, gardens and buildings. The remaining two are pioneers and follow-up men.

a. GOD'S FELLOW-WORKERS (III. A 3) Paul does not mean that he alone works with God, but rather that he and Apollos are both servants of the same Master. Accordingly, this passage shows both the lowliness and the dignity of the Christian worker. The Christian worker is a servant; his responsibility is to obey his Master. Unless he is humble enough to take orders, he cannot do the work of God. Yet, the importance of his work and the greatness of his Master give dignity to his service.

b. GOD'S GARDEN (III. A 4) While explaining the meaning of the parable of the wheat and the tares to His disciples, Jesus said: "The field is the world" (Mt. 13:38). In I Corinthians 3:9, a different Greek word is used for "field." It means a *fenced garden* that is intensively cultivated by irrigation. Thus, we

see that while the Word of God is to be broadcast over the whole world, it is also to be cultivated intensively within the small separate groups of believers. These believers, gathered together as churches, are God's spiritual gardens, where the fruit of the Spirit will be brought forth by intensive cultivation. While engaged in *extensive* sowing of the seed (God's Word), we must not neglect the *intensive* cultivation of the church.



c. GOD'S BUILDING (III. A 5) We have already learned that The New Testament never uses the word "church" (*ecclesia*) to describe a building (II. A 7); yet, believers are sometimes pictured as a building. Jesus used this picture the very first time He spoke of the church: "On this Rock I will build My church" (Mt. 16:18). Peter later explained that the church was built of "lively (i.e. living) stones"

(I Peter 2:4,5). These living stones are believers—all those who put their trust in Christ.

In their relationship to local churches, God's servants have two functions to perform. They must first of all be pioneers. Afterwards, they must serve as follow-up men.

- d. GOD'S PIONEERS (III. A 6) When we think of pioneering a garden, we turn our attention to *planting* (3:6-8). It is true that the ground must be prepared first, but that is really part of planting. Most important of all, we must use the right kind of seed. If wrong seed is planted, no amount of after-care or follow-up work will produce a proper harvest.

When we think of pioneering in relation to a building, we turn our attention to *the foundation* (3:10,11). If the building is to be solid, the foundation must be sound. To rear a building on an inadequate foundation is wasted effort. Note how our Lord Jesus used this same word-picture in Matthew 7:24-27.

There is only one spiritual foundation and that is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (3:11). For this reason Paul determined to make "Christ, and Him crucified" (2:2), the only message of his pioneering efforts. No other foundation is of any use in church building.

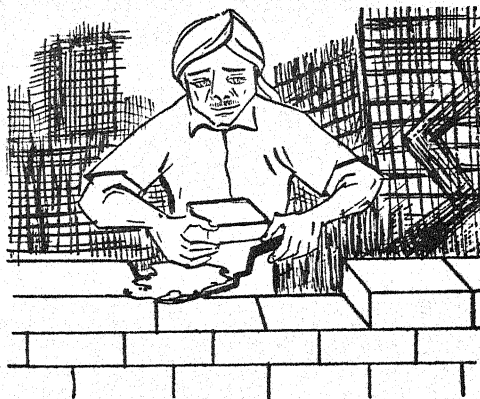
- e. GOD'S FOLLOW-UP MEN (III. A 7) In the picture of the church as a garden, pioneering corresponds to planting; follow-up, to watering. Without water, plants wither. If the farmer is to have a crop, he must irrigate as well as plant. But after-care will also include weeding and pruning as well as watering. A garden over-grown with weeds indicates neglect. God expects His servants to labour so that He will have fruit from His garden (cf. Heb. 6:7-12).

In Paul's picture of the church as a building, pioneering is laying the foundation while follow-up is completion of the structure. Even a solid foundation is of no use in itself; something must be added.

That which is added must be solid also, for it is building done for God (3:12).

If we are called to continue a work which

some other servant of God has begun, let us build to please the Master.



Incidentally, this LIT course is follow-up work. We are watering seed that someone else has sown; we are building on the foundation (Christ) which has already been laid. It is our prayer that this course will bring forth spiritual fruit in your life—that it will be used by God in the construction of the spiritual building He desires you to be.

2. A Time of Testing 3:13-15 (III. B 1) In the previous two lessons of this course you completed four tests. You evaluated your own work by giving yourself two tests and the LIT office evaluated your work by means of the other two. All four examinations were important in that they revealed the true state of your learning. But there is a comprehensive examination ahead that will test the quality of your work in the entire LIT programme. In 3:13-15 Paul speaks of a future examination that will test the quality of each believer's work.

Behind a railway colony in south India, there is a large area of uncultivated land. Landless families squatted there building huts for themselves of waste materials. After some time, these huts completely surrounded the original stone buildings constructed by the railway. Now suppose a fire broke out in this community. Which buildings would be damaged? The huts of wood, bamboo and straw. Which

buildings would stand the test by fire? The properly built structures of stone and cement.

Similar building conditions prevailed in Corinth. The flimsy wooden huts of day labourers stood alongside the stone residences of wealthy landlords. Paul used this situation to draw a spiritual lesson. Both kinds of buildings mentioned in the preceding verses (11,12) are built on the same foundation and that foundation is Christ. For this reason these verses must refer to believers in Christ. But what do the buildings represent? The different buildings represent different efforts Christians make. It is the Christian's use of his time and talents that is being tested here. This test will reveal one of two things: work that is worthy of reward, or work that will not pass the test.

- a. . REWARDED WORK (III. B 2) Only work done for God's glory, in accordance with His Word and by the direction of His Spirit will pass the test of divine judgment. Paul likens this to work in gold, silver and precious stones. Such work builds the church as well as individual Christian lives. Let us not waste time and energy on any other kind of work! Let us engage in work that will be rewarded (v. 14).
- b. REJECTED WORK (III. B 3) All inferior kinds of work will not pass the divine testing day (i. e. "the day of the Lord"). See Isaiah 2:12; Acts 2:20. What are these works? Things done in self-will, for our own advantage or by our own natural talents. Such work is not durable. It has no eternal value. Paul says it is like "wood," "hay" and "stubble." It cannot stand the fire of divine testing.

Please note that the believer's own salvation is *not* in question here. This is *not* judgment of sin but judgment of service. Verse fifteen clearly teaches that the man whose work is being tested will be saved, even though his work may be proven of no value. Such a man will not receive any of the rewards God has planned for His faithful servants. (cf. I Cor. 9:16-27, especially v. 25; Phil. 4:1; I Thes.2:10; II Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; I Peter 5:4; Rev. 2:10; 3:11)

This is a solemn passage. The results of the test may be a humbling experience for many Christians. Therefore, let us

work for God and His church with this one thought in mind: One day everything we have done will be tested by God Himself. Will our deeds pass His test? May God help us to build with the gold, silver and precious stones of spiritual worth.



Remember, no works done in our own strength will stand the trial of the divine Examiner. Each of the five subjects of this section has a direct bearing on the divisions and party strife at Corinth. Since there is but one Foundation (Christ), there can be

but one Christian church erected upon that Foundation. To repudiate the one who laid the Foundation at Corinth, that is Paul, is to turn from the Foundation, Christ. Moreover, the real test of service is not what any man may say about it, but the judgment of Christ concerning the quality of the work.

3. A Time of Judgment 3:16,17 (III. C 1) In this passage, Paul likens believers to a temple. In the Greek language there are two different words for *temple*. One word refers to the whole building. The other word refers to the sanctuary or inner shrine. Paul uses the second word. He says, you Christians are the sanctuary in which God dwells on earth. Neither the great Jewish temple at Jerusalem, nor the Greek temple of Aphrodite at Corinth, can contain the God who made the universe. Instead, God has chosen to dwell in believers like those at Corinth. They are precious to Him. Any one who spoils them by false teaching or unspiritual example will be destroyed by God, for God's temple must remain holy. Inept rival leaders at Corinth should remember the preciousness of the lives they are influencing, and the divine judgment that awaits offenders.

In 6:19 this same figure of a temple is used in reference to the body of the individual Christian. In Ephesians, the same figure is applied to the church universal (Eph. 2:19-22). Here it refers collectively to believers at Corinth, although an indirect reference to individuals is also implied.

4. A Time for Reappraisal 3:18-23 (III. D 1) With verse eighteen, the Apostle Paul returns to the subject of wisdom he

introduced in chapter two. He does this to warn about self-deception. The first step toward true wisdom is to recognize one's own folly (v. 18a). The second step is to recognize the uselessness of worldly wisdom (v. 18b). Paul supports these two statements by two quotations from the Old Testament: Verse nineteen is a quotation from Job 5:13. Verse twenty is a quotation from Psalm 94:11. This leads Paul to a conclusion which he introduces by the word "Therefore". "Therefore, let no one boast of men" (v. 21 R. S. V.) by making them party leaders.

Then Paul tells us why he has come to this conclusion. His statement is astounding. He says: "*All things* are yours." This is Paul's way of reminding us that God's gifts are given for the use and profit of the whole church, not just a part. Then he lists some of the things he has in mind:

- a. **MINISTERS (III. D 2)** For the nurture of His church, God has given apostles, prophets and leaders with special gifts. The Apostle mentions a few ministers that all Corinthians knew—Paul, Apollos, Cephas. Today, we could add the names of Calvin, Luther, Wesley, Spurgeon, Moody or Sadhu Sundar Singh. We could also mention the names of great teachers and preachers who are still living. They have all been given for our profit; and we will profit from them, if we accept them as gifts from God.
- b. **THE WORLD (III. D 3)** Paul has just condemned the wisdom of the "world" in verse nineteen. Now he uses the same word, but probably in a different sense. Although we should shun the world system controlled by Satan, there is much we can learn from the orderly universe created by God.
- c. **LIFE AND DEATH (III. D 4)** Both of these are given us by God. We should learn from both. We can live abundantly because Christ died for us. We can die daily to sin because Christ lives in us.
- d. **THINGS PRESENT AND THINGS TO COME (III. D 5)** God has devised the very pattern of time to minister to our needs. Remember, the future belongs to the Christian, because it is in the hands of his Lord.

- e. **ALL THINGS (III. D 6)** Paul is handling a list that cannot be exhausted. So he ends his listing with words that include everything. But, even this climax is not the end of the story. It is only the Apostle's presentation of the first of three principles. In chapter eleven, our author will enlarge his subject to include a fourth principle. But let us identify the three principles that are now before us:

- (1) All things belong to the Christian. (Possession)
- (2) The Christian belongs to Christ. (Position)
- (3) Christ belongs to God. (Pledge of Mediation)

With such principles before us, it is certainly time for a reappraisal of our lives!

5. **A Time for Right Thinking 4:1-5 (III. E 1)** Paul has put his finger on wrong attitudes concerning church leaders. But what is the right way of thinking about them? Already, the Apostle has given us brief answers: They are God's servants (3:5). They are God's fellow-workmen (3:9). Now, in the first verse of the fourth chapter, he gives them two more titles: a) ministers or servants of Christ, and b) stewards of the mysteries of God.

- a. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST (III. E 2)** There are several Greek words translated "servant" in the English New Testament. One word literally means "slave" or "bond-servant." It is used in 7:21-23. Another word means "ministering servant." The English word "deacon" comes from this Greek word. Paul uses it in 3:5. Still another Greek word means "household servant." Paul does not use it in this epistle. It is a fourth Greek word that Paul uses in verse one. This word literally means "a subordinate," "an attendant" or "an assistant." Thus, "ministers of Christ" should be thought of as Christ's helpers.

- b. **STEWARDS OF THE MYSTERIES OF GOD (III. E 3)** A steward is a trustee or manager. He does not own the estate he administers or the business he manages. Therefore, faithfulness is the most essential quality of such a man (v. 2). In Luke 16:1-13, Jesus tells of a steward who lacked this quality of faithfulness.

It was the all-consuming passion of the Apostle Paul to be a faithful steward of that which was committed to him. But to whom was the Apostle responsible? Only to the Lord Jesus Christ! (v.3) Even though Paul was aware that the Lord Jesus knew all the details, he had a clear conscience about his ministry (v. 4). In all faithfulness, he had acted as a trustee, not as a lord.

Since ministers are God's stewards, those whom they serve should not yield to the temptation of judging their motives. Only the Lord knows the motives of His stewards. When He comes again, He will test the motives of each of His servants. Until then, we must faithfully judge all sin in ourselves (11:31) and all public sin in the lives of church members (5:12,13). However, we must leave the judgment of motives to the One who can "bring to light the hidden things of darkness" (v. 5).

Yes, ministers are the servants of God entrusted with the Word of God. But remember, they are God's servants—God's stewards—not yours. Paul reminds us all that it is time for right thinking on this subject.

6. A Time for Fatherly Advice 4:6-21 (III. F 1) Because of his great love and concern for the Christians at Corinth, the Apostle Paul begs them to stop making heroes of some leaders and doormats of others. His advice could be summed up by the following two lines of verse:

*Let names and sects and parties fall
And Jesus Christ be All-in-all.*

First, the Apostle advises against spiritual pride. Then, he contrasts the lives of the apostles with those of Corinthian leaders. Finally, he reminds them of his own spiritual fatherhood.

- a. **ABOUT SPIRITUAL PRIDE 4:6,7 (III. F 2)** In verse six, the Apostle suggests that "Paul" and "Apollos" and "Cephas" were *not* the actual names used by the different parties in Corinth. Paul used these well-known names rather than embarrass those whose names actually were involved. In any case, the teaching is the same: Christians must *not* glory in human leaders.

One man may be a better preacher than another. But who made him a better preacher? Who gave him the gift of preaching? Was it not God? If his special talent is a God-given gift, why should he pat himself on the back because of it? Or why should *you* pat him on the back because of it? Indeed, pride and boasting have absolutely no place in the Christian life. But if you want to see the Christian life in its fullest human manifestation, then look at the lives of the Apostles.

- b. ABOUT SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENT 4:8-13 (III. F 3) We must not take Paul's statements in verse eight literally. Paul is speaking ironically; he is saying the very opposite of what he means. If he were speaking instead of writing, we would sense the sarcasm in the tone of his voice. (cf. CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS: V. D 6)

Some Corinthians were laying claim to spiritual greatness. They were boasting of their own excellence. Now Paul takes a look at their loudly-publicised attainments. He may actually be quoting them in verse eight: You say you are "full," "rich," "kings." In any case, he compares their claims with those of the apostles. Just look at the contrast!

Corinthian Claims:

full
rich
reigning
wise
strong
honourable

Apostolic Claims:

hungry
naked
homeless
fools for Christ's sake
weak
despised

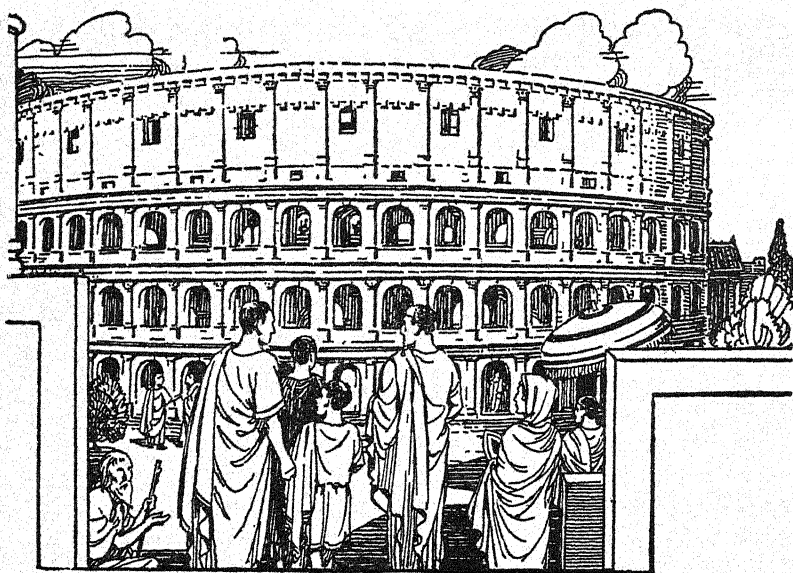
While some Corinthians were speaking and acting as if they had already entered into God's future kingdom (v.8), the apostles were being treated as condemned criminals (v.9). The reference is to an exhibition in the arena. The "last" or closing event was generally a battle between wild beasts and condemned criminals who were "appointed to death." This is the kind of appointment God

makes for the human leaders He chooses. Paul is suggesting that the would-be leaders at Corinth forget about their imagined attainments and see if they qualify for God-appointed leadership.

As if this were not strong enough language, Paul mentions some of the ways the apostles follow their Lord's example: They "labour, working with (their) own hands: being reviled, (they) bless; being persecuted, (they) suffer it; being defamed, (they) entreat" (vs. 12,13). And what does their exemplary leadership bring them? Only to be considered the "filth" and "offscouring" of humanity. These were the terms used for the miserable wretches who volunteered to become human sacrifices to appease the supposed displeasure of the Roman gods.

Now that you have had an intimate view of the privileges and responsibilities of Christian leadership, do you Corinthian contenders still want to be leaders?

- c. ABOUT SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD 4:14-21 (III. F 4)
Paul has brought his harsh words to an end. He



begins this new section by calling the Corinthians "be-loved children" (v. 14 R. S. V.). He uses these words of endearment because he is their spiritual father and because he truly loves them. Any other leader they may follow can only be a *pai-dag-o-gos* (i. e. a male ayah or child-trainer). Note verse fifteen where this Greek word is translated "instructors."

Paul is referring to a custom with which the Corinthians were familiar. Every wealthy Greek family with sons at home kept a slave called a *paidagogos*. He supervised the boys' activities and accompanied them to and from school. (See also Gal. 3:24,25, where the Authorized Version wrongly translates this word "school-master.") Thus, a Greek boy might have a large number of these "child-trainers" during his youth, but he would have only one father.

In the same way, Paul was the only spiritual father the Corinthians would ever have. Since he was their spiritual father, they ought to imitate him in spiritual things (v. 16). Since he was their father, he was planning to send Timothy to help them (v. 17). Since he was their father, he fully intended to visit them himself (vs. 18,19). When he arrives, he will fill the place of a father: he will both love and discipline them. What is your desire? Paul asks them. Do you want to face an angry parent who is forced to carry a stick? Or do you want me to come as a reconciled parent who will graciously help you put things right? (v. 21)

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 3:5-4:21 (III. G 1)

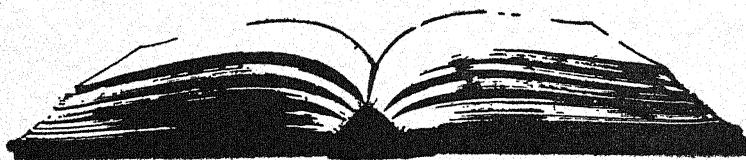
After putting his finger on their spiritual immaturity as the cause of the Corinthians' party strife, the Apostle Paul proceeds to apply a cure. He does this by turning their attention from themselves to the apostles. By unveiling the ministry of the apostles, Paul corrects false views that contributed to divisions.

Paul emphasizes the necessity of spiritual work by likening God's people to a garden and also to a building. Continuing the figure of the building, Paul tells about the testing God will make of all work done for Him. This will be a test by fire. Each workman will be rewarded according to

the results of that test. Then, the Apostle goes on to say that the spiritual building we are preparing for God is a temple. It is not a temple of wood and stone, but a temple of living people. For this reason, God's temple must not be despised or abused. Because it is God's, it is holy; every individual in it is set aside for God's special purpose. Therefore, every worker needs to reappraise his work in the light of God's plan and God's gifts.

In chapter four, Paul goes on to show that right thinking about God's servants is as important as right action in relation to God's temple of human beings. Pride can insulate us from reality and make us blind to the true leadership of men like the apostles. These men have already proven their appointment to leadership by their unusual lives of service.

Finally, Paul reminds the Corinthians that he is their spiritual father. It is this God-established relationship that moves him to write. He assures them that his parental concern will include discipline. How much better if the Corinthians correct their faults in the light of his instruction and advice! Otherwise, he will be forced to take sterner measures.



EXERCISES

Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. Paul told the Corinthians that a) their ignorance; b) their strife; c) their pride; d) their lack of achievement; was caused by spiritual immaturity. (III. A 1)
2. The founder of the church in Corinth was a) Apollos; b) Cephas; c) Paul; d) Sosthenes. (III. A 2)
3. The true foundation on which to build Christian testimony is a) proper church order; b) the sacraments; c) Jesus Christ Himself; d) the Apostle Peter. (III. A 6)
4. If any Christian's works do not survive God's final test, a) he will suffer loss; b) he will receive a very small reward; c) he will be sent to hell; d) he will be sent back to this world to try again. (III. B 3)
5. In this present age, the Spirit of God dwells in a) consecrated church buildings; b) the consecrated bread of the Lord's Supper; c) those who believe in Christ; d) those who are church members. (III. C 1)
6. True Christian workers should be thought of as a) servants of Christ; b) agents of Mission Boards; c) employees of the church; d) servants of the people. (III. E 3)
7. The motives of God's servants should not be judged a) unless we know them very, very well; b) until they are dead; c) until the Lord comes; d) until they are given opportunity to explain themselves. (III. E 3)
8. In comparing their experiences with those of people brought into the Roman arena, Paul says that the apostles were like those who a) appeared first on the programme to receive the applause of the crowd; b) appeared in the middle of the programme to entertain the crowd; c) appeared last of all, to be executed as condemned criminals with the approval of the crowd; d) failed to appear and thus won the displeasure of the crowd. (III. F 3)
9. Paul taught that the Christian's reward will be based a) on the effectiveness of his work for Christ; b) on the length of his service; c) on the quantity of his work; d) on the quality of his work. (III. B 2, 3).

10. Primarily, the kingdom of God is established through
a) power; b) weakness; c) eating and drinking; d) words.
(III. F 4)
11. Paul urged the Corinthians to follow him a) because he
was the only competent leader; b) because he was their
spiritual father; c) because he was well educated; d)
because he had received a vision. (III. F 4)
12. The Greek word *paidagogos* refers to a slave who acted
as a) child-trainer; b) schoolmaster; c) priest of a
pagoda; d) supervisor of a harem. (III. F 4)
13. The true character of every believer's works will be
revealed a) at the time of his death; b) in the Millen-
nium; c) at the day of the Lord; d) when this earth is
destroyed by fire. (III. B 3)
14. The Apostle Paul quotes Job 5:13 and Psalm 94:11 to
prove a) that cliques in the church of Corinth are un-
scriptural; b) that the temple is defiled; c) that self-
deceit is the undoing of the wise; d) that ministers
should not be honoured. (III. D 1)
15. In I Cor. 3:16 the figure of the temple refers primarily
a) to individual believers; b) to priests or ministers; c) to
Christians collectively; d) to the meeting place of the
Corinthians. (III. C 1)
16. If a man is to become wise unto salvation, he must a)
drop his arrogant attitude of knowing it all; b) become
a leader of the church; c) reconcile the truth of science
and the truth of Scripture; d) act like a fool. (III. D 1)
17. The Christian believer's security does not lie in human
beings but a) in the Scriptures; b) in the church creed;
c) in his faith; d) in God. (III. D 5)
18. In I Cor. 4:1 the word "ministers" literally means
a) bond-slaves; b) subordinates; c) household servants;
d) government officials. (III. E 2)
19. The most essential quality of a steward is a) faithful-
ness; b) intelligence; c) courage; d) skill. (III. E 3)
20. Paul a) cruelly criticized the Corinthians; b) publically
exhibited their faults; c) lovingly instructed and firmly
corrected them; d) shamed them before their neighbours.
(III. F 1,2)

1. b; 2. c; 3. c; 4. a; 5. c; 6. a; 7. c; 8. c; 9. d; 10. a;
11. b; 12. a; 13. c; 14. c; 15. c; 16. a; 17. d; 18. b;
19. a; 20. c.

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Three

You may use your Bible and text-book in completing this examination. Quote proof texts whenever you can to give substance to your statements. Ten marks will be given for each question correctly and adequately answered. Post your finished examination by first class mail to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P., India.

1. List the signs of spiritual immaturity Paul mentions in this portion of his epistle.
2. a. What two pictures of Christian work does Paul use in chapter three?
(1).....
(2).....
b. How does Paul use these pictures to describe the work he did at Corinth?
(1).....
(2).....
3. a. When will God reveal the worth of every believer's works?
b. In what way will the works of the believer be tested?
c. What will be the results of this test?
4. How does I Cor. 3:15 prove that Christians are not saved by works? Is it possible to build upon the true Foundation (Christ) and not produce abiding works? Explain.
5. a. How does Paul rebuke the Corinthians for their boasting?
b. What is more important than eloquence?
6. a. What did Paul mean when he wrote to the Corinthians, "all things are yours"?
b. Why is the Christian without any reason for boasting?
7. a. What is a steward?
b. Why did Paul describe himself and Apollos as "stewards of the mysteries of God"?

- c. Whose will determined Paul's way?
8. a. List the trials and difficulties the apostles had to endure.
b. Why could Paul urge the Corinthians to follow him?
9. a. What was the work of the Greek *paidagogos* or "instructor" mentioned in 4:15?
b. To whom did Paul liken this servant?
10. Why did Paul plan to send Timotheus to Corinth?



LESSON FOUR
ILLCIT SEX AND LEGAL SUITS



COMMENTS ON CONDITIONS IN CORINTH
1:10-6:20 (con't.)

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CAUSE 1:10-3:4 (See Lesson II)

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CURE 3:5-4:21 (See Lesson III)

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE 5:1-13

1. Excommunication of the Immoral 5:1-5
2. Cleansing of the Church 5:6-8
3. Separation from Offenders 5:9-13
 - a. FORNICATORS
 - b. COVETOUS PEOPLE
 - c. IDOLATERS
 - d. REVILERS
 - e. DRUNKARDS
 - f. EXTORTIONERS

CHRISTIAN LITIGATION 6:1-8

1. Overlooks the Destiny of Saints 6:2,3
2. Overlooks the Abilities of Saints 6:4-6
3. Overlooks the Spirit of Saints 6:7,8

CHRISTIAN ETHICS 6:9-20

1. Moral Change 6:9-11
2. Moral Fitness 6:12
3. Moral Purity 6:13-20

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 5:1-6:10

In the first six chapters of his first letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul comments on conditions in Corinth, as they had just been reported to him. In the four chapters we have studied, he deals with church cliques and the relationship laymen should have with church leaders. Now, he is forced to deal with a very unpleasant matter—that of immorality. Paul devotes the larger part of the next two chapters to this subject, but he does interrupt himself long enough to deal with the problem of believers suing one another in public courts of law. Read these two chapters (five and six). Then, proceed with the comments on this lesson.

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE 5:1-13 (IV. A 2) In LESSON ONE, we learned that "Corinthian" was a byword for immorality. We also learned that the temple of Aphrodite gave religious sanction to immorality. Keep these facts in mind as you study the next two chapters of Paul's letter.

1. Excommunication of the Immoral 5:1-15 (IV. A 1) It was public knowledge that one of the Corinthian believers was living in sin. Paul calls the sin "fornication" (5:1). He is using the word in its broad general sense of immorality. (The R.S.V. rightly translates it "immorality.") But this case was not a mere lapse into a single immoral act. Paul specifies that it was incestuous immorality. It involved a continuing relationship between a son and his own stepmother.

Paul reminds the Corinthians that every society has restrictions against marriage between those closely related. Even people who knew nothing of the Scripture would not tolerate such a relationship. This was the sin of Jacob's oldest son, Reuben. Because of it he was disinherited (Gen. 35:22; 49:4).

The part of this whole shameful affair that especially disturbed the Apostle Paul was the attitude of the church. Instead of being ashamed and taking steps to right the wrong, the Corinthian church permitted it to continue. They were so busy promoting their own opinions and the leaders of their own cliques that they couldn't be bothered with an affair that might upset their programme. Completely occupied with trifles, they were unmindful of essentials.

Paul speaks out both against this open sin and the negligence of the church in failing to deal with it. He stipulates

the action that should be taken even though he is not present to carry it out.

This is Paul's directive: The Christians at Corinth, as a group, were to discipline this immoral member. This was to be done "in the *name* of our Lord Jesus Christ." The word "*name*" means authority. The Christians were to act for Christ—in the authority of Christ—just as a wife, who has a letter of authority from her husband, signs his name and conducts his business in his absence. But what were the Corinthian Christians to do to this sinner by the authority Christ had given them? Paul tells them in verse five: They were "to deliver such an one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (5:5). What does Paul mean by this?

In II Corinthians 4:4, Satan is described as "the God of this age." In John 14:30, he is called the "prince" or ruler "of this world." It is obvious to us all that Satan holds power over men of this world. But he does *not* rule the hearts and minds of believers. They acknowledge the authority of God, and of His Anointed—the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, a member of the church, who is formally removed from fellowship (i. e. excommunicated), is put out of a group who are under the authority of God and put into a group who are under the authority of Satan. Whatever the exact nature of this drastic action, we should note its purpose. It was *not* prompted by hatred, cruelty or retribution. It was to be carried out with the hope that the one being disciplined would "be saved in the day of the Lord" (v.5). It was discipline with a view to spiritual restoration. For this reason, it must be done by the church, in humility and with love.

What were the actual results of this discipline? From Paul's second letter to these same people (II Cor. 2:5-11), we learn that the Corinthians followed his advice and the desired result, in both the life of the individual and of the church, was attained.

2. Cleansing of the Church 5:6-8 (IV. A 3) The Apostle Paul continues to rebuke the carelessness of the Corinthians in failing to discipline gross offenders. "Your glorying is not good" (5:6), he writes. How can you pride yourselves in your

spiritual attainments and your partisan teachers as long as you do nothing about sin in the church? This is a repetition of Paul's accusation that they are "puffed up" (5:2). Now, Paul is pressing on from mere facts to the reasons for those facts. The fact of sin in the church was the result of a tolerant attitude toward sin. Discipline deals with the fact of sin so as to remove the reasons that encourage it.

Then the Apostle goes on to point out that the danger of sin is its potential. It is like leaven—yeast, or any other substance that causes fermentation. A very little leaven will soon spread throughout the whole substance and cause it to be "puffed up" (5:6b). So sin in the life of any member of the church, soon affects the moral and spiritual life of the whole church. Don't minimize the destructiveness of sin.

Having established a principle—the penetrating destructiveness of sin—the Apostle declares a precept: *All sin must be purged* (5:7a). Even a small amount will eventually destroy everything. There is no other course but to eliminate it. "Purge out the old leaven," Paul insists. The individual believer and the church of God must be pure; otherwise, Satan will take advantage of the situation. By discipline, the church can cleanse itself. At all costs, the church *must* maintain its purity. If it does not, the church cannot fulfil its purpose as the temple of God. Anything that cannot fulfil its purpose is destroyed. It is without meaning or usefulness. If the church does not maintain cleanliness, it will not maintain its usefulness. The Apostle does not agree with those who say: "Cleanliness is next to godliness." No! Cleanliness *is* godliness. When cleanliness goes out the door, godliness goes with it.

In verses seven and eight, Paul refers to the Feast of Unleavened Bread that was observed at Passover time (Ex. 13:6,7). Before the feast, each householder searched his home very carefully and removed every particle of leaven. Throughout the entire week of the feast, no leaven was permitted in the home. It was kept clean of all fermentation. This fact greatly altered the routine and the diet of the home.

The Apostle Paul applies the spiritual meaning of this custom to the Christian church. Just as leaven was sought out and removed from Jewish homes at Passover time, so sin

must be sought out and removed from the church at all times. Just as the Passover lamb was slain for the deliverance of Jewish believers (Ex.12:3-11), so Christ, the Lamb of God (Jn. 1:29), has been slain for our deliverance from sin (Rev. 5:9). As individual believers, we need not remain in bondage to sin. As a church, we need not remain under Satan's power.

Now the Apostle Paul states the logical conclusion: "Let us keep the feast" (5:8a). He is not speaking of the Jewish Passover of the old covenant; that is only his illustration. He is not speaking of the Communion Service of the new covenant; he will deal with that subject in chapter eleven. Instead, he is speaking of the Christian's whole life. The Christian must keep a perpetual Feast of Unleavened Bread—a life constantly free from the contaminating power of sin. Such a life can only be nourished on "sincerity" and "truth."

3. **Separation from Offenders** 5:9-13 (IV. A 4) Already, Paul has spoken concerning two aspects of discipline: Discipline as it affects the offender, and discipline as it affects the whole church. Now, he speaks of a third aspect: discipline as it affects other individual believers in the church.

From verse nine, we learn that the letter we call FIRST CORINTHIANS was not Paul's, first letter to the Corinthians. Paul had written a previous letter. In it he had stressed the need of separation from fornicators. This instruction had been misunderstood. In their thinking, the Corinthians had turned from one extreme to another. They had turned from an attitude of tolerance that almost amounted to partnership in wrongdoing, to an impractical attitude toward sinners that would demand complete withdrawal from the world (monasticism).

In verse ten, Paul corrects the wrong impression his former instruction had caused. In substance he says: I don't want you associating with immoral *believers*, but I do not include the *non-Christian world* in this prohibition. The world of men is made up of idolaters, cheats and libertines. There is nothing wrong in associating with these people. Indeed, not to do so, would lead to complete isolation, like that of a man in quarantine. Christian discipline involves members of the church only. God will judge the world, but He has made believers responsible to keep the church above reproach. So, in addition to formal excommunication from the church,

individual members must also separate themselves from fellowship with believers living in open sin.

In LESSON THREE we learned that there are many things which can only be judged by "the Lord . . . who . . . will bring to light the hidden things . . . the counsels of the hearts" (4:5). Church discipline is not concerned with these things. Church discipline has to do with open, wilful sins of church members. Which sins belong to this category? Paul lists six sins: fornication, covetousness, idolatry, slander, drunkenness and extortion. More correctly, Paul lists those who are guilty of these sins and recommends them as candidates for excommunication from the church. Going beyond this, he advocates that individual believers separate from their fellowship. Eating together encourages close fellowship (cf. Mk. 14:18). It is this kind of contact that the believers must avoid.

Let us note the characteristics of those from whom we should separate.

- a. **FORNICATORS 5:10,11 (IV. A 5)** Fornicators are those who engage in any kind of sexual sin. Any man engaging in sexual intercourse outside the provisions of marriage is a fornicator and unfit for fellowship with the saints. (cf. Ex. 20:14; Lev. 18:6-23 esp. v. 20; 20:10; Deut. 22:13-30; Mt. 5:27, 28, 32; Jn. 8:3-11) Primarily, the fornicator sins against himself—against his own body (cf. 6:18). He allows his lower nature to rule over his higher nature. Thus, he makes himself something less than a man.
- b. **COVETOUS PEOPLE 5:10,11 (IV. A 6)** The Bible considers the covetous person among the greatest of sinners. This is because covetousness is the root of so many other sins, such as lying, theft and even murder. The covetous person develops an excessive desire to possess something that belongs to someone else. Unless rooted out of his life, this excessive desire will drive him to use dishonest means. This was the story of Achan's downfall (Josh. 7). The covetous man sins primarily against his neighbour. He regards him as someone to be exploited, rather than someone to be loved and helped. Read Jesus'

warning against covetousness recorded in Luke 12:15.

- c. IDOLATERS 5:10,11 (IV. A 7) An idolater is one who worships idols, or anything else in place of God. He allows some "thing" to usurp the first place in his life. Thus, he gives up the true God for a false god. Scripture constantly condemns idolatry in the strongest words, because it is a sin against God. The Old Testament law dealing with the idolater is found in Deuteronomy 17:2-7. (Paul will have more to say about idolatry in chapters eight and ten.)
- d. REVILERS (OR RAILERS) 5:11 (IV. A 8) A reviler is one who uses abusive language against another for the purpose of harming him. Christ was reviled (Mt. 27:39), and so were the apostles (4:12). The Old Testament law forbidding this type of conduct is written in Exodus 23:1-3. This serious sin of the tongue was the besetting sin of the Greeks. Paul insists that those guilty of it must be disciplined or the Christian community would be destroyed.
- e. DRUNKARDS 5:11 (IV. A 9) A drunkard is a person who drinks alcoholic liquor to the extent of becoming drunk. Scripture gives many warnings against drunkenness. Especially read Isaiah 5:11,22; Galatians 5:19-21; and Ephesians 5:18. Note also the sentence of death which Old Testament law pronounced upon the habitual drunkard. Read Deuteronomy 21:18-21.
- f. EXTORTIONERS 5:10,11 (IV. A 10) An extortioner is a person who obtains his livelihood by threats, force or fraud. He is really a thief, for he takes other people's property by force. Yet, he generally does it in such a way that he does not run counter to the laws of the land. Note these Bible verses that condemn different types of extortion: Isaiah 10:2; Amos 5:11; Matthew 18:28, 23:25; Luke. 3:13. Instead of being an extortioner, the believer should live by honest work (Eph. 4:28)

We have noted the different types of sinners who should not be given the privileges of Christian fellowship. Now, let us note that which is common to them all. Each offender, regardless of his offence, is living a life contrary to his faith.

Each is wilfully unfaithful in his conduct. Immoral people like this must be disciplined, as well as those who teach false doctrines. Yet, we must admit that most church discipline has been directed against those who hold different doctrine, not against those of improper deportment.

Because of their spiritual immaturity, the Corinthians had neglected church discipline altogether. To jar them from their complacency, Paul ends his instruction with a curt command: "Drive out the wicked person . . ." (5:13 R.S.V.). This command is a slightly altered quotation from the book of Deuteronomy, where it occurs eleven times (13:5; 17:7,12; 19:13,19; 21:9,21; 22:21, 22,24; 24:7). Paul applied Scriptural truth to the immediate spiritual needs of erring converts. Let us pray that we may be empowered to do the same.

CHRISTIAN LITIGATION 6: 1-8 (IV. B 1) Christians always have had disputes with one another. There was such a difference of opinion in the early church at Jerusalem that it became a disruptive issue. Fortunately, members of the church settled the matter *among themselves* to the satisfaction of all concerned. Read Acts 6:1-6.

Disputes at Corinth were not being settled in the same manner as at Jerusalem. Instead of deciding their disputes within the church group, believers were suing one another in government courts (6:1). Paul takes them to task for doing this. Six times he asks: "Do you not know . . .?" (See 6:2,3,9, 15,16,19) What are the things the Corinthians should know, but are overlooking? What does church litigation overlook?

1. Overlooks the Destiny of Saints 6:2,3 (IV. B 2) In the age to come, believers will be entrusted with great responsibilities. These responsibilities will involve world problems. If you are destined to solve world problems, Paul asks, is it not logical to suppose God has given you ability to solve trivial local disputes—especially disputes about property and money? Those who are to share in Christ's victory and authority (Mt. 19:28; Dan. 7:22) also will share in His judgment of angels who rebelled (II Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6). Remember, you Christians are destined to judge the world, not to be judged by the world.

2. Overlooks the Abilities of Saints 6:4-6 (IV. B 3) Paul is trying to shame the Corinthians: Don't you see what you

are doing? You are dragging your Christian brethren before unconverted judges who have no place whatever in the church. After your bragging about "wisdom," isn't there a single *brother* wise enough to handle these matters for you? Just as you have overestimated the abilities of some party leaders, you have underestimated the abilities of the majority of Christians.

3. Overlooks the Spirit of Saints 6:7,8 (IV. B 4) The Gospel is a message of love and forbearance. Jesus taught that we gain by losing (Mt. 19: 21,29). The one who truly follows the meek and lowly Nazarene will choose to suffer wrong rather than inflict wrong. A follower of Christ does not act in a spirit of vengeance, but in a spirit of love. So those who file civil lawsuits against fellow believers have by that very act lost their case. The lawsuit itself is a "defeat." ("To have lawsuits at all with one another is defeat for you" 6:7 R.S.V.) It is a defeat because it is a violation of the spirit of Christ. Since you are now a Christian, you must act like a follower of Christ, not like the Greeks who make the law courts their chief amusement.

Paul's advice, on what believers should do when there is a dispute between them, is based on Matthew 18:15-17. In this passage, Jesus sets down three steps to effect reconciliation: The very first step is to meet privately with the brother with whom you are in disagreement. If agreement does not result from this meeting, a second effort should be made. Several understanding brethren should be included in this second meeting. Only when this effort at reconciliation fails should the third step be taken. In that event, the dispute should be brought to the believer's highest court on earth—the church. If a brother refuses the decision of this court, he places himself outside the jurisdiction of the church, and is to be treated accordingly.

From the above you will see that civil courts have no place in the settlement of purely Christian matters. Christ's teaching, which Paul applies to the Corinthians, is not a condemnation of civil courts. Neither does it forbid Christians from seeking civil justice when imposed upon by unscrupulous non-Christians. The Biblical directives before us apply to controversies between Christians.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS 6:9-20 (IV. C 1) Paul deals with

this subject under three subdivisions: moral change, moral fitness and moral purity.

1. Moral Change 6:9-11 (IV. C 2) Paul reminds his readers that to be a Christian is to live by a very different standard than the average Corinthian. He calls the average Corinthian "unrighteous" (v.9), because his life does not display the righteousness of God. Such individuals cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

Then, to put meaning into his choice of the word "unrighteous," Paul lists ten types of sinners who come under this heading. Six of these offenders have already been listed as those who should be excommunicated from the church. Now, Paul adds another type of defrauder—thieves—and three more kinds of sex sinners—adulterers, effeminate and homosexuals. It was especially the sin of the last named individuals that premeated the whole of Greek and Roman society, until these civilizations died as if stricken by cancer.

Into the midst of these decadent, dying civilizations came the Good News of salvation: God loves; God cares; God has sent His Son to save man from his vices. Even in immoral Corinth, many believed. Their lives were changed. They began to live purposefully. They lived by a new set of values—by Christian principles. The very dregs of humanity were transformed.

Let us look carefully at a more accurate translation of Paul's words about these changed people. We will divide Paul's statements into their parts so that we can see their relationships to one another. "Such were some of you: BUT—

- a) "you have washed yourselves clean
- b) "you were sanctified (or made holy)
- c) "you were justified (or declared righteous)
- d) "in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ
- e) "and in the Spirit of our God."

Like the Dravidian languages of South India, Greek uses a special reflexive verb form when a person does something for himself. This is the verb form used in the sentence following "a" above. Sentences "b" and "c" use simple passive forms of the verb. They describe things which happened to the Corinthians, *not* things they did for themselves. Obviously, phrase "e" belongs with sentence "b," since the Corinthian believers

were sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Similarly, phrase "d" goes with sentence "c," since the believers at Corinth "were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ." That leaves sentence "a" separate, yet in some way connected with God's gifts of justification through Christ and sanctification through the Holy Spirit. To what does "you have washed yourself clean" specifically refer?

The Greek verb used in sentence "a" occurs only one other place in the New Testament. Do you recall the circumstances of Paul's conversion? After his conversion on the road to Damascus, he was led into the city. Then, God sent Ananias to minister to him. Among the first words Ananias said to Paul were these: "Arise, *get yourself baptized*, and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16, literal translation).

We can be sure the Apostle never forgot those words. His baptism marked the end of his old life, as a persecutor of the church of God, and the beginning of a new life, as a preacher of the Gospel. In the same way, by asking for baptism, the Corinthians showed that they had put away their old sins and now intended to live for God. A moral revolution had begun in their lives. God had justified and sanctified them, but they also must do their part in continuing to live out the moral changes symbolized by their baptism.

2. Moral Fitness 6:12 (IV. C 3) In all probability, the Apostle Paul is quoting a saying much in vogue among Christians at Corinth: "All things are lawful for me" (6:12; 10:23). It is quite possible that this was one of the Apostle Paul's statements to them while explaining the Christian's freedom to use all of God's gifts. (cf. Gal. 5:1, 13; Rom. 6:22; 8:21) The principle Paul had applied to foods, the Corinthians were applying to all manner of questionable things. Paul quotes this principle and then shows that there are definite limitations to its application.

The first limitation of Christian liberty is that conduct must be "expedient," that is profitable. Your conduct may be correct from a purely ethical point of view; but, if it is not beneficial to *you*, you are not at liberty to persist in it. Your conduct may not violate moral standards; but, if it harms *others*, you are not at liberty to continue it. (cf. 8:7-13; Rom. 14:14-23)

Christians must have a higher standard than lawfulness. Their conduct must suit their profession of Christ; it must benefit all mankind.

The second limitation to Christian liberty is that you must never permit your conduct to get out of control. Even that which is lawful must not gain control over the Christian. The Christian is truly free only as long as he maintains self-control. Rutherford so translates Paul's statement as to reveal his play on words: "I may do as I please . . . but I will not let things do as they please with me."

Christians must have a higher standard than lawfulness. They must live to please God. (cf. I Thes. 4:1) This was the limitation that Christ put upon His own conduct (Jn. 8:29).

Now let us apply these two limitations of Christian liberty to a specific activity: Is smoking wrong? Some Christians have argued that smoking is not specifically forbidden in the Bible, so a believer is at liberty to smoke. Let us apply the two tests Paul has laid down. First, is smoking helpful? Even non-Christian doctors answer with an emphatic "NO." They quote research results indicating that smoking is harmful to the body of the smoker. Secondly, is the smoker liable to lose self-control? Most smokers admit that the use of tobacco is habit forming. On the basis of Paul's teaching, there is only one possible conclusion concerning the Christian and smoking: Although morally lawful, it is *not* fitting for the Christian to smoke.

3. Moral Purity 6:13-20 (IV. C 4) You and I live in a day when all moral laws are being questioned. The so-called "new morality," popularized by John Robinson, Douglas A. Rhymes and others, bases moral conduct on love alone, without any regulating principles. From this section, we see that the teachings of "new morality" are at least as old as Corinth.

We have already seen that the Christian is the freest of all men, even though there are limitations to his freedom. Forgetting these limitations, the Corinthians argued that the Christian was free to do whatever he liked—free to follow his instincts. The Christian satisfies his recurring hunger with food, they pointed out. Then, it is just as logical for him to satisfy his recurring sexual desires by visiting a prostitute,

they reasoned. They thought this reasoning was very enlightened.

The Apostle Paul's answer is full and clear. He shows them that they are putting dissimilar things together. The stomach and everything that satisfies it are transient. They will soon pass away. But the whole man, whose body and personality are involved in the sex act, will live forever. Man is eternal. Even his body—the physical part of his being—is eternal (v. 14; chap. 15). Yes, you can say: "Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats;" but you cannot say: Prostitution for the body, and the body for prostitution. Rather, you must say: "The Lord for the body, and the body for the Lord" (v. 13).

Since the body is eternal, God has great concern for it. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members (literally "the limbs") of Christ?" Paul asks (v. 15). Are you not aware that your personal relationship with God is as intimate a relationship as that of marriage? (cf. v. 17; chap. 12; Eph. 5:28-32) Can a body that belongs to Christ be literally prostituted to someone else? It is unthinkable!

Now Paul advances his argument by still another question: "Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body?" (v. 16) Then Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 as teaching that intercourse makes two people one physical body, just as faith makes God and man one spirit. Sexual union involves the mingling of personalities as well as bodies. For this reason, it is more destructive than any other sin (v. 18; cf. Prov. 6:32). Immorality is not a sin to argue about, but one from which we must run. (cf. Gen. 39:7-12).

Now Paul is ready with the final point of his argument. Again, he puts it into the form of a question: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?" In 3:16,17 he had stated that the church must be pure because God makes it His dwelling place. Now, he says the same is true of the individual believer. That means that our bodies, as well as our spirits, are sacred. Even our physical bodies, so despised by non-Christian Greeks, are consecrated to the use of God. Would the Jews set up an idol in their Temple at Jerusalem? No, that would be an "abomination"! (cf. Mt. 24:15). May the Christian give the temple of his body to one

who is incompatible with Christ? No, equally that would be "abomination"! The temple of God must be kept for the glory of God.

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 5:1-6:20 (IV. D 1).

In this lesson the Apostle Paul deals with three problems that were disturbing the Corinthian church: the problem of discipline (5:1-13), the problem of litigation (6:1-8) and the problem of impurity (6:9-20).

In answering the first problem, Paul insisted that wilful sinners must be excommunicated, and that believers must not fellowship with those who are immoral. He also pointed out that the ritual of the Jewish Passover holds spiritual lessons for the Christian: "Christ, our Pascal Lamb, has been sacrificed. Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival . . . with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (5:7b, 8. R.S.V.).

In answering the second problem, Paul pointed out that dragging a fellow believer into court involves three contradictions: the destiny, the ability and the spirit of the saints. He reminds us that Christians are yet to "judge the world," and to "judge angels."

In answering the third problem, Paul showed the relation of the believer's body to the Lord Jesus Christ. Don't say that the body doesn't matter, he warns. It does matter—both in this life and in eternity. True, some bodily functions are connected with this life only. But other characteristics of the body (e.g. personality) involve eternity. Even now, the believer's body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. In the future, the believer's body will be resurrected to be with Christ. Therefore, "the body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body" (6:13 R.S.V.). As far as the believer is concerned, this is the purpose of life.

In dealing with the murkiest of sins, the Apostle Paul has set before us exceedingly precious gems of truth. Let us recognize their value, and let us make them the adornment of our lives.

EXERCISES

Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. How many Corinthian Christians were living in open sin?
a) Many; b) A few; c) One couple; d) None. (IV. A 2)
2. The sinning church member is to be delivered to Satan for the destruction of a) the flesh; b) the spirit; c) the body; d) the soul. (IV. A 2)
3. In the Bible, leaven is a picture of a) good influence; b) sin; c) divine blessing; d) the Gospel. (IV. A 3)
4. The Passover lamb is a picture of a) the church; b) Christ; c) the disciples; d) death. (IV. A 3)
5. Christians should discipline a) those inside the church; b) those outside the church; c) all sinners whether inside or outside the church; d) Jews. (IV. A 4)
6. When may believers take each other to court? a) Whenever disputes occur. b) When other efforts to settle the matter have failed. c) Under no circumstances. d) When damages exceed Rs. 1,000.00. (IV. B 4)
7. In the future the saints will judge a) other saints; b) sinners; c) fallen angels; d) church leaders. (IV. B 2)
8. The unrighteous shall a) not inherit the kingdom of God; b) never be able to accept Christ; c) eventually improve themselves through education; d) buy their way into God's favour. (IV. C 2)
9. The body is a) for fornication; b) for self-indulgence of any kind; c) for the Lord; d) for the marriage partner only. (IV. C 4)
10. The Christian who joins himself to a harlot a) becomes one body with her; b) is using a normal outlet for his sexual desires; c) is committing a trivial sin which should be ignored by his fellow-believers; d) is rightly fulfilling God-implemented instincts. (IV. C 4)
11. As evidence that saints are capable of judging disputes between believers, Paul mentions a) that they are well educated; b) that they have the respect of their community; c) that they are experienced in legal procedures; d) that they will judge the world with Christ in the age to come. (IV. B 2)

12. Paul shunned many legitimate practices because a) they were too expensive; b) they were not profitable; c) they might cause his parents anguish; d) they might make him fat. (IV. C 3)
13. The sin of immorality is different from other sins in that a) it cannot be forgiven; b) it is against God; c) it may harm another person; d) it destroys the sinner's personality. (IV. C 4)
14. Paul argues for holy living on the basis a) that it is good for society; b) that it sets a good example before our children; c) that believers should not break the Seventh Commandment; d) that individual believers are the temple of the Holy Spirit. (IV. C 4)
15. The Christian's chief purpose in life should be a) to have a good time; b) to be a good husband or wife; c) to glorify God; d) to earn a lot of money so he can support the church. (IV. C 4)
16. Since the Christian life is a perpetual Feast of Unleavened Bread, from what should it be free? a) Sin; b) Leaven; c) Controversies; d) Wine. (IV. A 3)
17. When a believer knows that another professing Christian is impure, he should a) give him a good scolding; b) tell others about it; c) report him to the civil authorities; d) break fellowship with him. (IV. A 4)
18. In what passage of the Bible will you find instruction given by the Lord Jesus Christ concerning the solution of disputes among Christians? a) I Cor. 5 and 6; b) Mt. 18:15-17; c) Mk. 18:15-17; d) Jn. 17:1-26. (IV. B 4)
19. Church discipline should be used to correct a) improper conduct; b) erroneous doctrine; c) ignorance; d) immaturity. (IV. A 10)
20. What Old Testament character committed sin with his father's wife? a) David; b) Samson; c) Reuben; d) Judah. (IV. A2)

1. c; 2. a; 3. b; 4. b; 5. a; 6. c; 7. c; 8. a; 9. c; 10. a; 11. d; 12. b; 13. d; 14. d; 15. c; 16. a; 17. d; 18. b; 19. a; 20. c.

EXAMINATION

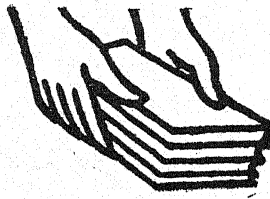
I Corinthians Lesson Four

You may use your Bible and text-book in completing this examination. Quote proof texts whenever you can to give substance to your statements. Ten marks will be given for each question correctly and adequately answered. Post your finished examination by first class mail to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P. India

1. Fill in the blank spaces.
 - a) "A little leaven leaveneth....."
 - b) "Christ our is sacrificed for us."
I Cor. :
 - c) "Put away from yourselves that..... person."
 - d) "Do you not know that your bodies are.....
..... of Christ'?"
 - e) The body of the believer is a
of the..... Spirit.
2. List ten types of people who will not inherit God's kingdom.
 - a)f).....
 - b)g).....
 - c)h).....
 - d)i).....
 - e)j).....
3. Is there any hope of salvation for men and women of the type you have listed in question two? Quote Scripture to support your answer.
4. How does the Passover lamb picture the Lord Jesus Christ?
5. Answer the Hindu who says: "My neighbour is a Christian, but every body knows he visits prostitutes. Do all Christians live immoral lives?"
6. Answer the Christian who says; "I cannot make my

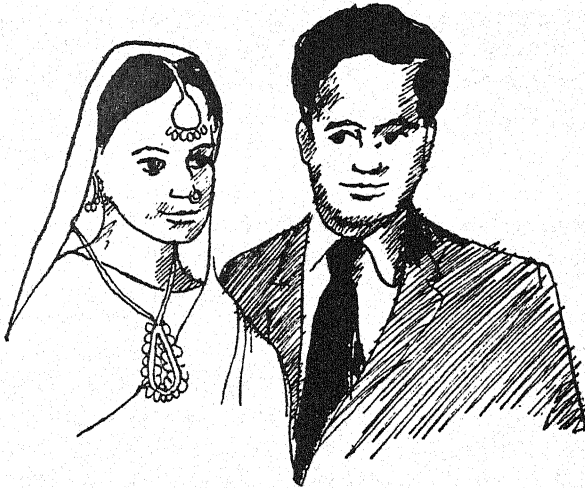
fellow Christians respect my rights unless I take them to court!"

7. What steps should a Christian take to settle a dispute with a fellow-believer? What should he do if he cannot get justice?
8. What are the basic differences between the instincts of hunger and sex? In what essential way are sexual sins different from other sins?
9. Answer the following questions briefly.
 - a) What makes a man and woman one flesh?
 - b) What awful sin was going unjudged among the Christians of Corinth?
 - c) With whom may the Christian associate?
 - d) Why is the covetous man listed with fornicators and drunkards?
 - e) Name a legitimate activity the Christian should not practice because it is of no benefit to him.
10. Six times the Apostle Paul begins his argument with a question. List the six things he expected the Corinthians to know.



LESSON FIVE

CELIBACY, MARRIAGE, DIVORCE & SERVICE



COMMENTS ON CONDITIONS IN CORINTH 1:10 6:20

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CAUSE 1:10-3:4 (See Lesson II)

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CURE 3:5-4:21 (See Lesson III)

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE, LITIGATION and ETHICS
5:1-6:20 (See Lesson IV)

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FROM CORINTH 7:1-11:34

MARRIAGE OR CELIBACY 7:1-9

1. The Advantages of Celibacy 7:1,7
2. The Responsibilities of Marriage 7:2-6
3. The Honourable Choice for Christians 7:8,9

MARRIAGE OR DIVORCE 7:10-24

1. The Rule 7:10,11
2. The Exception 7:12-15
3. The Reason 7:16
4. The Principle 7:17,20,24
5. The Illustration 7:18, 19, 21-23
 - a. THE CIRCUMCISED vs. 18,19
 - b. THE ENSLAVED vs. 21-23

MARRIAGE OR SERVICE 7:25-38

1. The Reply 7:25,35-38
2. The Reasons 7:26-34
 - a. THE IMPENDING DISTRESS vs. 26-28
 - b. THE SHORTNESS OF TIME vs. 29-31
 - c. THE CARES OF MARRIAGE vs. 32-34

MARRIAGE OR DISOBEDIENCE 7:39,43

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 7:1-40

With the seventh chapter, we have arrived at a new division of the epistle. Paul has been commenting on reports he received about conditions in the Corinthian church. Now, he begins to answer questions asked by the Corinthians in their letter to him. He has been dealing with problems involving great moral issues. Now, he turns to matters of moral indifference, which must be decided on the grounds of expediency.

The Apostle Paul has been severely criticized for the advice he gives in chapter seven. This has been due primarily to a misunderstanding of what Paul is attempting to do. He is *not* presenting a comprehensive treatment of the subject of marriage. Instead, he is answering specific questions which are not disclosed to us, except through his answers. It would be helpful to have a copy of the letter sent to the Apostle. Since God has not seen fit to preserve this letter for us, let us carefully read the forty verses of this seventh chapter, noting the different circumstances of people involved and the temporary conditions that form the background against which the Apostle gives his answers. Unless we are careful and discerning, we too will apply the Apostle's advice to people and circumstances for which it was not intended.

Now that you have read chapter seven, let us note that the Apostle Paul deals with marriage and its desirability under *four different either/or circumstances*. Which is preferable: marriage or celibacy; marriage or divorce; marriage or Christian service; marriage or disobedience to God's Word? These are the problems, relative to marriage, that confused Christians at Corinth.

MARRIAGE OR CELIBACY 7:1-9 (V.A 1) Some expositors have condemned the Apostle Paul unjustly as an ascetic, woman-hater. Let us carefully distinguish that which he advises for the majority of Christians, and that which he advises for the minority.

In the first two verses of this passage, the Apostle states two basic but contradictory principles: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (v. 1.). Because of "fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (v. 2). How does Paul reconcile these two statements?

1. The Advantages of Celibacy 7:1, 7,8 (V. A 2) The

unmarried state is called celibacy. It is celibacy that the Apostle Paul is advocating in verse one. When he says: "It is good for a man not to *touch* a woman," he means not to have sexual intercourse with *any* woman. At first, this might seem like a contradiction of God's purpose as expressed in Genesis 2:18. But we must remember that conditions in Corinth were far removed from the idyllic surroundings of Eden. The teaching and practice of the temple of Aphrodite had led many people into wrong ideas about sex. These erroneous ideas had led to grossly immoral practices. Under these circumstances, and with the prospect of persecution looming in the shadows of the future, Paul advocates the advantages of a continent (i. e. chaste) life. If you are unmarried, there are definite benefits in remaining unmarried. Under present circumstances celibacy is the ideal state. (cf. vs. 25-38) The married state is not the only way for Christians to live. Indeed, for some people, it is less preferable.

However, Paul realizes that most people do not live in the realm of the ideal, but in the realm of the expedient. For this reason, he sets forth a second principle (vs. 2,6,7).

2. The Responsibilities of Marriage 7:2-6, 9 (V. A 3)

Marriage is an honourable state for those who prefer it. However, it can be abused, and it does impose responsibilities along with privileges.

If a Christian chooses marriage, what sort of marriage should it be? Note Paul's words carefully: "Let every man have *his own wife*, and let every woman have *her own husband*." This principle forbids both *po-lyg'a-my* and *pol'y-an-dry*. *Polygamy* is the practice of a man having more than one wife at the same time. This was a common type of marriage in Old Testament times. It is still practiced by some communities in India today—especially Muslims. *Polyandry* is the practice of a woman having more than one husband at the same time. Although less common than polygamy, it is still practiced by some tribal communities today—notably, the Todas of the Nilgiri Hills in South India. Thus, we see that Christian marriage must be like that instituted by God in Eden. God provided *one* wife for Adam, and Adam was Eve's *only* husband. This is called *mo-nog'a-my*.

Marriage implies a willingness for sexual union (v. 3).

No longer does either member of the union have absolute authority over his own body (v. 4). The two are "one flesh" and members one of another. For this reason abstinence from sexual union should be by mutual consent and for limited periods. If husband and wife agree to refrain, it must be for some valid reason, such as more time to devote to prayer (v. 5). Other legitimate reasons, such as health, are taken for granted. However, those who do refrain must not feel that they are superior to others.

Paul's advice is sane, common sense. A married Christian should avoid prolonged periods of separation from husband or wife. There is no adequate reason for a young married woman spending long periods of time in her mother's home when her first baby is born. Likewise, husbands and wives should avoid employment in places far away from each other. These practices are morally dangerous and are condemned by the verses before us.

3. The Honourable Choice for Christians 7:8, 9 (V. A 4). Well, what is the conclusion? Should a Christian marry, or is it more honourable to remain single? Let us note that Paul defends celibacy against those who would regard it as unchristian. Let us note also that Paul defends true marriage as the norm for most Christians. In verse seven, Paul shares his personal conviction that for him celibacy was preferable. However, this would not be the best choice for everyone. Each Christian is free to act according to his own disposition and circumstances.

Paul's personal choice of celibacy raises a question about his marital state. Obviously, he had no wife at the time he wrote this letter (vs. 7, 8; 9:5). Does that mean that he had never married, or that his wife was dead? Was he a bachelor or a widower? We can only surmise, but your present writer is inclined to believe he was a widower. It is unlikely that an unmarried man could have attained such an eminent position in Jewish life as that enjoyed by Paul before his conversion. Evidently, Paul was a man of such resolution that he found it easy to control his appetites. Yet, he realizes that he is the exception, not the rule. He reminds his zealous imitators that it is folly to take a vow of celibacy unless God has given you an unusual amount of will power.

Before proceeding to the next topic, let us note that

these two principles have not been dreamed up by Paul, as some people suppose. Paul is declaring what God revealed to him. When he says in verse six, "This I say by way of concession, not of commandment," he is informing us that marriage is not a divine command, but a divine permission. Because a person is a Christian, he is *not* under obligation to marry.

MARRIAGE OR DIVORCE 7:10-24 (V. B 1) In the previous section, the Apostle Paul discussed the question: Should an unmarried Christian permit himself to be tied in marriage? Now, he takes up the opposite question: Should a married Christian seek to release himself from a marriage tie that already exists?

1. The Rule 7:10, 11 (V. B 2) Unlike the unmarried Christian, the married Christian does not have a choice. Paul relays God's charge to him: Do not desert or divorce your marriage partner. Even if separation occurs, strive for a reconciliation (vs. 10, 11; cf. Mt. 19:6).

2. The Exception 7:12-15 (V. B 3) There is one exception to the divine pronouncement against separation. This is the case of "mixed marriages." By a mixed marriage we mean a marriage between a believer and a non-believer. Such a marriage may have taken place through disobedience to God's Word (7:39c), or it may have been celebrated before the believer was converted. In the latter case, the believer is blameless, but may have a real problem on his hands.

Apparently, there were those in Corinth who said that a believer had a right to divorce his unbelieving spouse. They probably pointed out that Jesus had not spoken about such a case (v. 12). They may have added that Ezra forced Jewish believers to separate from their Gentile wives (Ezra 10). They may well have concluded that cohabitation with an unbeliever defiled the Christian.

Whatever the origin of the Corinthians' false conclusions about divorce, Paul is quick to correct them. He advises believers to go on living with their unsaved partners, just as long as the partner is willing to maintain the relationship. In doing this the believer does not defile himself (v. 14; cf. Heb. 13:4). On the contrary, the believer sanctifies the unbeliever, so that their children are under no stigma.

This passage has been misunderstood to teach that the children of mixed marriages are fit subjects for baptism. However, those who make this point do not include the unbelieving husband or wife, who also is said to be "sanctified." We should note that baptism is not under consideration in this passage. Paul is only removing the sincere concern of some Christians that their marriage relationship may unfit them for communion with God.

Now, Paul deals with a second possibility in mixed marriages (v. 15). The unbeliever may *not* be willing to live with his marriage partner after the partner's conversion. He may seek another mate whom he considers more congenial. In such a case, Paul says the Christian is not "under bondage." In other words, the Christian, whose unbelieving partner remarries, is released from his former marriage vows, and is free to marry again. Yet, the Christian must make every effort possible to be reconciled with his marriage partner. He is *not* free from the marriage tie until his partner has remarried. The Christian must not seek divorce except in the case of infidelity on the part of his partner (v. 10; cf. Mt. 5:31, 32; 19:9).

3. The Reason 7:16 (V. B 4) Would it not be better for a believer to terminate his marriage relationship with one who is unsympathetic with his new life? Some Christians believed that this question had only a positive answer. Paul gives us the right answer in verse sixteen. Please note that his answer is an emphatic "NO." You believers married to unconverted partners have a wonderful opportunity to be the means of their salvation. Don't disturb your former social ties unnecessarily, but rather use them to glorify Christ. (cf. I Pet. 3:1,2)

4. The Principle 7:17, 20, 24 (V. B 5) Paul has declared God's prohibition against divorce with its permissible exception in the case of mixed marriages. He also pointed out one of the more immediate reasons for that prohibition. Now, the Apostle lays down the principle that should govern the Christian's conduct in regard to marriage, and all other fundamental social relationships.

This principle is basic. So that the reader cannot miss the point, Paul states the principle three times, using slightly different words. Read verses 17, 20 and 24. By this repeated principle, the Apostle Paul refutes the idea of some Corinthian

converts, who say: Since we have accepted Christ, we must break all our former social ties, including that of marriage. No, says the Apostle Paul. After conversion, a person should live under the same social framework as before.

Paul gives no exception to this general principle. It goes without saying that antisocial conduct is *not* included in this principle. Those who were thieves or prostitutes repented of their sin on becoming Christians. Naturally, they would not return to conduct for which they had repented.

5. **The Illustrations 7:18, 19, 21-23 (V. B 6)** Although Paul gave no exceptions to his principle of Christian conduct, he does give us two illustrations—the status of those who have been circumcised and of those bound by the institution of slavery.

- a. **THE CIRCUMCISED 7:18, 19 (V. B 7)** Circumcision is a minor surgical operation performed on the male. It consists in removing part of the foreskin of the male organ. According to Jewish law, this operation was performed on every Jewish boy when he was eight days old (Gen. 17:10-14). It was the sign of the old covenant which God made with Abraham. Paul tells the Jew converted to Christianity that he need not hide his origin. He need not attempt to become "uncircumcised." Of course, we must not take this statement literally. Surgically it is impossible to restore the foreskin after it has been cut off. Paul is telling the Jewish convert that he need not renounce his spiritual heritage. He need not be ashamed of the spiritual reality for which circumcision was a symbol. On the other hand, a Gentile convert does not need to be circumcised. For Christians, this external rite has no significance. The important thing is the convert's obedience to the commandments of God. Obedience will include the purity and separation for which circumcision stood.

In India today, is there any parallel to this illustration? I think there is: Among some Christians, it is customary for baptismal candidates to change their names. This was not generally done in New Testament times. Apollos, one of the men who helped build

the church in Corinth, had the name of a Greek deity. He did not change his name when he became a Christian.

- b. **THE ENSLAVED 7:21-23 (V. B 8)** Now Paul turns to a second illustration. Slavery was very common during the first century of the Christian era. A slave had no civic or personal rights. For example, he was not a member of the town assembly (*ecclesia*). When such a person becomes a Christian, he may find that slavery restricts his freedom of worship. Should he remain a slave? Unless he gains his freedom by socially acceptable means, he should remain a slave, Paul advises (v. 21). "In the Lord," every slave is made free, for he is a member of the "*ecclesia* of God." The reverse is also true. "In the Lord," all free men are slaves, for they all have been bought by the blood of Christ (vs. 22, 23; cf 6:20). Here Paul is alluding to a custom his original readers would understand—the method by which a slave could purchase his own freedom. How did he do it? By earning small amounts of money in his spare time. This money he deposited in the temple. After years of back-breaking work, the priest paid his purchase price to his master and the slave became a freedman. The Christian also is a freedman. Not freed by his own efforts, but purchased by Christ through the sacrifice of Himself.

Paul has stated a clear principle by which Christians in all kinds of circumstances can regulate their lives. The believer ought to remain in the same social circumstances in which he was before he responded to the call of God (v. 24). This principle applies to marriage as well as other social institutions. If Indian converts were more ready to heed this advice, perhaps Hindu opposition to conversion would be less.

There is another application we can make of this principle. Some young men, on coming to know the Lord Jesus as Saviour, have an immediate desire to leave their secular work and engage in full-time Christian service. This is seldom a wise thing to do. It would be better for them to remain in their secular calling and devote their free time to Christian work. After they have given their testimony to those who

know them best and gained experience through local Christian service, they will be of more value to the Lord in the full-time service to which He may call them.

MARRIAGE OR SERVICE 7:25-38 (V. C 1) The Apostle Paul had been asked what Christian parents' duties were to an unmarried daughter. Should parents arrange for the marriage of their daughters, or is it more Christian to withhold consent? Paul gives an answer to this question and also his reasons for that answer.

1. The Reply 7:25,26,35-38 (V. C 2) Paul states that the principle he has already mentioned applies to this problem also. It is better for each convert to remain as he is (v. 26). However, it is not a matter of right or wrong. Those who give their daughters in marriage cannot be charged with wrong conduct. Neither may those who withhold their daughters from marriage be denounced as unchristian (vs. 36-38). The central issue that all parents should grasp is this: Marriage of your daughters is not the most important thing in life. Service for Christ is *more* important. To give in marriage, or *not* to give in marriage, should be determined in the context of the individual's service for his Master.

2. The Reasons 7:26-34 (V. C 3) The Apostle Paul clinches the appropriateness of his reply by mentioning three timely reasons: "by reason of the distress that is upon us," because "the time is shortened" and because "I would have you to be free from cares." Let us note how each relates to marriage and Christian service.

- a. **THE IMPENDING DISTRESS vs.26-28 (V. C 4)**
In Paul's opinion persecution was likely to break out at any time. Very few Roman governors were as fair-minded as Gallio. Christians were misunderstood and suspected. In the unsettled conditions that seemed to be just around the corner, unmarried Christians would have an advantage. They would not be burdened with a family. They would be free to serve or to escape as occasion demanded.
- b. **THE SHORTNESS OF TIME vs.29-31 (V. C 5)**
Paul's words must not be pressed beyond their meaning. He is not saying that Christ will come immedi-

ately. Neither is he saying that Christians should give up all secular duties for spiritual pursuits. His statements apply to *all* of us. Time is short (v. 29). Opportunity is passing. What you intend to do for Christ you must do NOW. Keep your life in proper perspective: Since secular things are not permanent, don't be overly concerned about them. This advice applies as much to the unmarried as to the married.

- c. THE CARES OF MARRIAGE vs. 32-34 (V. C 6)
Paul's desire for the Corinthians harmonizes with God's will. God does not want any of His children to be overburdened with care or worry (v. 32; cf. Phil. 4:6). Marriage *does* add to a person's cares. It can easily result in divided interests (vs. 33-35). It is the married person's duty to give consideration to his mate. If such consideration will interfere with his service for His Master, the Christian had better remain unmarried. On the other hand, if his intended mate is equally determined to serve the Lord, their united service could go beyond that of unmarried people. The aim of every Christian should be to serve the Lord without distraction.

More than a hundred years ago, Dr. Alexander Duff, a Scottish missionary to India, discovered these words (in Arabic) inscribed on a gateway to a mosque at Fatchpur-Sikri, just 24 miles west of Agra:

*"Jesus, to Whom be peace, has said:
'The world is merely a bridge:
you are to pass over it, and
not to build your dwelling upon it' " !*

The Bible does *not* contain these words attributed to Jesus. However, the thought is expressed in Scripture. In the seventh chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul gives this same advice to married and unmarried Christians. Let us flee every care, including marriage, that would lessen our service for Him.

MARRIAGE OR DISOBEDIENCE 7:39,40 (V. D 1)
Corinthian parents not only had questioned the propriety of marrying their virgin daughters, they also questioned the fitness

of marrying their widowed daughters. Was it proper for a Christian widow to remarry? Is a second marriage unseemly or unchristian? The Apostle Paul concludes his answer about marriage with a brief word of instruction concerning widows.

As in Romans 7:2 and 3, the Apostle states that death breaks the marriage bond (v. 39). This means that a widow is as free to marry as a virgin. This freedom does not extend to a woman who has left her husband, for she "is bound...as long as her husband liveth."

As in his earlier advice to others, the Apostle Paul feels that it is better for a widow to remain as she is than to remarry (v. 40). That this advice was given to meet immediate needs at Corinth is shown by Paul's contrary advice to Timothy: "I would have younger widows marry, bear children, rule their households, and give the enemy no occasion to revile us" (I Tim. 5:14 R.S.V.). Even in the difficult times that absorb the Apostle's attention as he writes to the Corinthians, a widow is free to remarry if that is her choice.

The new truth the Apostle Paul mentions, which applies to *every* marriage, is this: Those eligible to marry are only free to choose Christian partners. Paul says: "She is free to be married to whom she will; *only in the Lord*" (v. 39 A.R.V.).

In applying this restraint, it is evident that the Apostle would not permit a Christian to marry an unbeliever. A Christian should marry only another Christian. But does Paul's Spirit-inspired advice stop here? I think not: The marriage of a believer must be initiated and consummated by motives that do not violate the spirit of Christ. Any Christian contemplating marriage must be guided by the Spirit of God to choose the mate God has chosen already for him. In exercising his God-given freedom to choose a life partner, the believer must not be disobedient to either the directives or the spirit of his Master.

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 7:1-40 (V. E 1)

It would be a grave mistake for the student to pass over this lesson without giving it the attention it deserves. It does contain references that are temporary; it also contains principles that are permanent. These principles are applicable to the problems of present-day life. Few problems touch so

many of our lives as that of marriage and the related subjects discussed in this lesson. Let us see if we remember these truths and are applying them, or are prepared to apply them, to our lives.

In this lesson the Apostle Paul gives advice to Christians about marriage. First, he lays down some general principles regarding sex in marriage. Then, he gives advice to those who are unmarried or widowed. He also gives specific instructions to those who are entangled in marriage with an unbeliever. Then, he states a principle that applies to the unusual circumstances under which the Corinthians were living. He illustrates this principle with references to circumcision and slavery. Then, he discusses the relationship of Christian service to marriage and the possibility of being disobedient to God in the exercise of our freedom to marry.

These are truths we must fix in our minds and hearts, before the emotions that lead to marriage distort our ability to think and act without bias.



EXERCISES

(Answers: Page 88)

1. In the seventh chapter of I Corinthians, Paul is a) giving comprehensive teaching concerning marriage; b) expressing his uninspired opinions; c) reviling rich women like Chloe; d) answering questions asked by the Corinthians.
(V. Intro.)
2. The unmarried state is called celibacy. Celibacy is a) unchristian; b) preferable for some Christians; c) preferable for all people; d) impossible. (V. A 2)
3. Brahmacharya is complete abstinence from sexual intercourse. a) It should be practised by every married couple. b) It should never be practised. c) It should be the ideal toward which married couples strive. d) It should be practised only for short periods and for definite reasons.
(V. A 3)
4. Christians should practise a) monogamy; b) polyandry; c) polygamy; d) common law marriage. (V. A 3)
5. The Apostle Paul's personal choice was a) celibacy; b) the new morality; c) marriage; d) divorce. (V. A 4)
6. The teachings of I Corinthians 7:1-40 a) are Paul's own ideas; b) are drawn from first century customs; c) are divinely inspired truths; d) are outmoded moral regulations.
(V. A 4)
7. When a married man is converted, he should a) divorce his wife and marry a Christian girl; b) refuse to live with his wife until she becomes a Christian; c) continue living with her as long as she is willing; d) continue living with her but practise brahmacharya. (V. B 2, 3)
8. If a convert is deserted by her unbelieving husband who marries another woman, she should a) remain unmarried all her life; b) remain unmarried as long as the second wife lives; c) remain unmarried as long as her former husband lives; d) consider the advisability of remaining as she is, but is free to remarry. (V. B 3)
9. To live with an unconverted husband or wife, a) is the same as living in sin; b) is not spiritually defiling; c) is inadvisable; d) is a violation of the seventh commandment. (V. B 3)
10. A convert should normally a) seek employment in a Christian institution; b) continue in the same employment; c) quit work and enroll in Bible School; d) stop secular work and spend all his time in witnessing. (V. B 8)

11. A Christian widow a) is free to marry anyone she wishes b) is not free to marry anyone; c) is free from all moral regulations; d) is only free to marry a believer. (V. D 1)
12. A married woman is bound to her husband a) as long as he supports her; b) as long as he pleases her; c) as long as he lives; d) as long as he does not interfere in her worship of God. (V. D 1)
13. In times of persecution, it is advisable for unmarried Christians a) to postpone marriage; b) to marry as soon as possible; c) to take a vow of celibacy; d) to throw off all moral restraints. (V. C 2-4)
14. Christian parents are duty bound to give first consideration a) to the marriage of their daughters; b) to the support of their daughters in the parental home; c) to their daughters' service of God; d) to their own needs when old. (V. C 2)
15. The Christian need not be the mere slave of his employer a) because he is a superior individual; b) because he is above doing manual labour; c) because Christ has called him; d) because Christ is the Master of all men. (V. B 8)
16. The convert from Judaism should be most concerned about a) becoming "uncircumcised"; b) keeping God's commandments; c) differences between Judaism and Christianity; d) the return of Jews to Palestine. (V. B 7)
17. Paul advises Christians of mixed marriages a) to remarry; b) to use the relationship for the glory of God; c) to regard marriage as unimportant; d) to rebel. (V. B 4)
18. In I Cor. 7:10, Paul does not quote the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, but refers to His teaching a) about the woman taken in adultery; b) that divorce is not premissible except for infidelity; c) that angels do not marry; d) that Christians should live like Nazarites. (V. B 3)
19. The Apostle Paul gave three reasons why unmarried Corinthian Christians would find it easier to serve the Lord as single people. One reason was a) freedom from marital cares; b) the unusual corruption of Corinth; c) the smallness of the Christian community; d) the immediate return of Christ. (V. C 3-6)
20. The quotation, "The world is merely a bridge; you are to pass over it, and not to build your dwelling upon it," is found a) in I Cor. 7; b) in the Dead Sea Scrolls; c) in an O. T. passage; d) on a gateway to a mosque. (V. C 6)

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Five

Ten marks will be given for each question answered correctly and adequately. If you are studying for credit, post your finished examination to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P. Those studying for a degree may be asked some questions of this examination when they sit for their monitored, comprehensive examination.

1. Fill in the blank spaces :

- a. "To avoid fornication, every man should....."
- b. "It is better to marry than....."
- c. "The unbelieving husband is.....
by (or in) his (believing) wife."
- d. "Are you bound to a wife? Seek....."
- e. "The wife is bound by the law as long as....."

- 2. What lessons about marriage that are applicable today can we learn from the seventh chapter of I Corinthians ?
- 3. How should a Christian man who was converted after marriage treat his non-Christian wife?
- 4. Under what circumstances is a Christian freed from his marriage vows? Quote Scripture to support your answer.
- 5. Answer the woman who says: "My husband divorced me when I became a Christian and has married another woman. Am I free to remarry?"
- 6. Answer the man who says: "When I was converted my wife left me and is now living as a prostitute. She will not come back to me. I would like to marry a Christian woman. What is the Lord's will for me?"
- 7. Answer the young man who says: "I have believed on the Lord Jesus and want to witness for Him. Please baptize me at once and give me a job as an evangelist."
- 8. Answer the young Hindu who says: "I am in love with a Christian girl. She will not marry me because I am a Hindu. Please baptize me so we can get married." What advice would you give the Christian girl?

9. In your own words, explain Paul's teaching on separation and divorce as recorded in I Cor. 7:10-17.

10. Answer "yes" or "no" to each of the following questions or statements:

- a. Is a Christian woman free to marry an unbelieving man?
- b. Did Paul think his preference for celibacy should be followed by everyone?
- c. Did Paul permit individual Christians to apply his Spirit-inspired principles regarding marriages to their own circumstances?
- d. Did Paul actually teach that a child is lost if neither of his parents is a Christian?
- e. Paul believed that married life could be consecrated, but that it often involved duties difficult to harmonize with active evangelism.



1. d; 2. b; 3. d; 4. a; 5. a; 6. c; 7. c; 8. d; 9. b; 10. b; 11. d;
12. c; 13. a; 14. c; 15. d; 16. b; 17. b; 18. b; 19. a; 20. d.

LESSON SIX

LIBERAL LAYMEN AND LIMITED LIBERTY



COMMENTS ON CONDITIONS IN CORINTH

1:10-6:20(See Lessons I-IV)

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FROM CORINTH

7:1-11:34

CELIBACY, MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND SERVICE

7:1-40 (See Lesson V)

FOOD SACRIFICED TO IDOLS 8:1-13

1. Motivation of Conduct 8:1-8,13
 - a. PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE 8:1,2,4-8
 - b. BROTHERLY LOVE 8:1,3,13
2. Inviolability of Conscience 8:9-12
 - a. A HARD COMMAND v. 9
 - b. A HYPOTHETICAL CASE vs. 10,11
 - c. A HARROWING THOUGHT v. 12
 - d. A HIGHT-MINDED RESOLUTION v. 13

RIGHTS SACRIFICED FOR CHRIST 9:1-27

1. Seventeen Rhetorical Questions 9:1-18
2. One All-Embracing Principle 9:19-23
3. Two Athletic Illustrations 9:24-27
 - a. THE RUNNER AND THE PRIZE vs. 24-26a
 - b. THE BOXER AND DISQUALIFICATION vs. 26b,27

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 8:1-9:27

In our last lesson, the Apostle Paul began to answer the questions asked him by members of the church at Corinth. The first question had to do with marriage and its related subjects of celibacy, divorce and service to the Lord. Paul's answer is contained in I Corinthians 7.

With chapter eight, the Apostle turns from the delicate problems connected with marriage to the very difficult problem of Christian liberty. Paul's answer to our many problems of conscience extends from 8:1 through 11:1. Read this entire section right now before continuing with the lesson.

Paul's answer to the problems of liberty and conscience are so important and extensive that we will not be able to cover the whole subject in this lesson. Nevertheless, we can begin. Let us begin by observing the form in which the Corinthians ask their second question.

FOOD SACRIFICED TO IDOLS 8:1-13 (VI. A 1)
Gentile converts at Corinth were surrounded by immorality and idolatry. These two closely associated evils could almost be said to characterize their community (cf. Rev. 2:14,20). They could not escape contact with these practices and their effects; yet, they wanted to live above them; they wanted to live like Christians. So, they asked Paul various questions with a view to escaping the insidious influences of immorality. Now, they ask a question related to idol sacrifices: Is it right for a Christian to eat meat offered to idols (v.1)? Our present lesson and the one that follows is Paul's answer.

Please note that Paul does not immediately answer either "yes" or "no." Such answers can be given to things that are either right or wrong. This second question of the Corinthians involves conduct about which there are honest differences of opinion. Some men would forbid such an act. Other equally sincere Christians might allow it. A small minded man might voice his own opinion and be done with it. True to his usual method, the Apostle Paul sets forth principles by which each Christian can answer the problem according to his own conscience in the altered circumstances of each experience. It is this method that lifts Paul's answer above the temporary, local problems of one city, and makes it an invaluable guide for problems of conscience in all places.

In 6:12 and in Romans 14:1-15:13, Paul gives brief

instructions concerning our present problem of liberty and conscience. However, the passage immediately before us (8:1-11:1) is the "place of chief reference" (cf. C.F: V. C 1-5), that is, the place where we will find the most exhaustive treatment of this ever-present problem.

How does Paul get at the general underlying principles of this personal question of the Corinthians? He examines the motivating powers of conduct and insists on the inviolability of conscience.

1. Motivation of Conduct 8:1-8,13 (VI. A 2) Many motives determine our conduct. Any particular act may be the result of several mixed motives or of one motive regulated and controlled by another. Paul calls our attention to two basic motives that are involved in all questions of conscience: thought and feeling; or more specifically, personal knowledge and brotherly love.

- a. **PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE 8:1,2,4-8 (VI. A 3)** It was characteristic of the Greeks to "seek after wisdom" (1:22). Greek Christians tended to be proud and even *puffed up* (8:1; cf. 4:6,18,19; 5:2; 13:4; Col. 2:18) over their new-found Christian knowledge. Paul cautions them that their pride of knowledge can drive them to disastrous results, like the frog who burst in his efforts to become as big as an ox. Human knowledge will always be incomplete regardless of the extent of our learning (v.2). We often show the meagre limits of our knowledge by our pretentious display of the little we possess.

We should not imagine that Paul considers knowledge unimportant. He doesn't say that! Knowledge *is* important to *every* Christian. We have produced this course of study so that your knowledge of I Corinthians may be increased. But we do not expect your knowledge of this epistle to be complete. The trouble with knowledge is that it always remains imperfect. For this reason, our conduct must be supplemented by a second motivating force which Paul mentions in verse three. Before considering this motive that supplements and perfects our conduct, let us examine the local

problem and the different degrees of knowledge that were being applied to its solution.

Animal sacrifices were offered daily in Greek temples. History tells us that one offering of "extraordinary value" consisted of a bull, a ram and a pig. Many, and all sorts of animals were slain. Some temples had public meat shops attached to them. After the sacrificial animal was offered to the idol, its flesh was sold in these shops or served to guests at temple-sponsored banquets as is done today at the Kali Temple, in Calcutta. Idolaters highly prized and enjoyed such food. In their enjoyment, they magnanimously wanted to share with their friends, even their Christian friends. What ought to be the Christian's response? Should he eat in order to preserve friendship? Should he refuse to eat in order to maintain a distinctive Christian testimony? How was he to resolve the almost daily conflict in social behaviour which confronted him in the non-Christian world in which he lived? Some Corinthian Christians had scruples against eating any meat offered to idols. Others gloried in their freedom.

Liberal laymen, who prided themselves on their understanding, were arguing like this:

- 1) There is one true God (vs. 4c,6).
- 2) An idol is only an image made by man (v. 4b).
- 3) Meat has nothing to do with spirituality (v.8; cf. Mk. 7:17-20).
- 4) Conclusion: I will not be harmed if I eat.

This reasoning is logical. The conclusion is correct. Yet, we sense that there is a flaw in it. What does this conclusion lack?

Paul points out that such reasoning is Greek knowledge, not Christian knowledge. Christian knowledge is always humble. It is never self-centred. It is the knowledge of a personal relationship—a personal relationship with God—and that relationship is a relationship of love. It is a relationship that ties the believer to a family—the family of God. Your conduct has consequences

beyond the act itself. Your conduct affects people—especially Christian brethren.

- b. BROTHERLY LOVE 8:1,3,13 (VI. A 4) In contrast to knowledge that *puffs up*, love “edifies,” that is, it *builds up* (v. 1). How? How does love “build up” the Christian’s life? By illuminating those relationships that knowledge leaves obscure. By prompting the believer to learn the will of God, and also to do the will of God. By moving the believer to be concerned about others, especially weaker believers. This is the *building up* we all need. Thus, as Paul will take the whole of chapter thirteen to show, love is the only adequate force to propel us along the God-appointed way of life. True love will regulate our knowledge so that our conduct becomes helpful rather than harmful.

What would be the reasoning about idol-sacrificed food on the part of the Christian motivated by love as well as knowledge? He would reason like this:

- 1) There is only one true God (vs. 4c, 6).
- 2) An idol is only an image made by man (v. 4b).
- 3) Meat has nothing to do with spirituality (v. 8).
- 4) Conclusion: I will not be harmed if I eat; BUT, how will my eating affect my brother? I will govern my conduct by his welfare (v. 13).

Do you see any difference in the reasoning of the Christian guided by knowledge and the Christian guided by both knowledge and love? Not very much! Their reasoning is the same all the way to the “BUT.” Yes, BUT that final addition of concern for others makes all the difference. It is a *significant* difference. The Christian motivated by knowledge only, thinks *only* of himself. The Christian motivated by love as well as knowledge, thinks about others *as well as* himself. To which group do

you and I belong? We know there is only one true God. We have turned from the "gods many" and from the "lords many" to the "one Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things" (v. 6). We have made Him Lord of our lives. Nevertheless, remember there are millions of people in our country who do not have this knowledge. Does our knowledge make us feel important, arrogant, superior to them? If so, we need to set out in search of love. In doing this, we will not penalize ourselves; rather, we will add the most enriching experience to our own, and our neighbours, lives.

Thus we see that love centres its attention upon others. But in matters of questionable conduct, where will love's motivation and concern be focused? On the inviolability of the individual's conscience.

2. Inviolability of Conscience 8:9-12 (VI. A 5) Every man, Christian or non-Christian, has a conscience—an innate sense of right and wrong—a faculty by which he judges conduct (Rom. 2:14,15). The philosopher, Immanuel Kant, called it the categorical imperative. It may be "pure" (4:4; cf. I Tim. 3:9), dulled or "defiled" (I Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:15), guilty (Jn. 8:9), "void of offence" (Acts 24:16; Rom. 9:1), or "good" (I Tim. 1:5, 19; I Peter 3:16). Sometimes, we also speak of an erring conscience, but there is no such thing. A man's conscience does not err, even though the standard by which his conscience acts may be wrong or imperfect. It is just such a conscience that Paul calls "weak" (v. 7), because it is not able to carry the believer's faith to its logical conclusion. But, it is not really the conscience that is at fault, but the knowledge by which it is guided. A "weak" conscience can be strengthened by proper information, but it cannot be forced or violated without harm to the individual. Knowing this, the Apostle gives us a command, cites a case, throws out an arresting thought and declares his own resolution.

- a. **A HARD COMMAND v. 9 (VI. A 6)** Paul now addresses a sharp command to the liberally-minded Christian who glories in his freedom: "Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a

stumblingblock to the weak" (v. 9 A.R.V.). Paul is saying: Don't violate your neighbour's conscience. Instead, through understanding and imagination, enter into his very real and sensitive feelings as well as his conscientious motives. Practice the Golden Rule (Mt. 7:12) in all your relationships with your weaker brother. (cf. Rom. 15:1,2)

Just suppose you headed a column of men marching down the parade ground. By what would you judge the length of the stride you should take? By your own long legs? No! By the legs of the shortest man in the column. You would "take heed" that you did not cause him to get out of step or stumble because of a stride that was more than he could take. Do the same spiritually, Paul commands.

- b. A HYPOTHETICAL CASE vs. 10,11 (VI. A 7) In verses ten and eleven, Paul imagines an example of a violated conscience. It is the case of a Christian with an untrained conscience seeing a Christian, who thought himself beyond temptation, eating meat that had been offered to an idol. The situation is heightened by placing the action in an "idol's temple." What is the effect upon the weaker Christian's conscience? He is "emboldened," literally *build up*, to do the same thing. But to do the same thing is to go contrary to his conscience, since he has scruples against eating meat offered to idols. The change may appear to be *building up* or edifying him; actually, it is *tearing down*. Note the irony in Paul's play on words. The truth is that this experience would cause him to "perish," that is, to lose his well-being and peace of mind, since



he still feels that eating such meat and going to an idol temple is wrong. Even though the weak brother's conscience misled him, he cannot disobey it without violating it, and thus, defiling himself. In Romans 14:23, Paul says: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Violating one's conscience—believing one thing and doing another—is always sin. Why should any Christian cause a brother "for whom Christ died" (v. 11b) to sin?

Paul now confronts each one of us with a sobering thought about the higher implications of our conduct.

- c. A HARROWING THOUGHT v. 12 (VI. A 8) This is the climax of Paul's argument, and it strikes the offending Christian with shattering force. Not only are weaker brethren affected by our loose and thoughtless actions, but *our Lord Jesus Christ* also is affected. By our selfish conduct, we "sin against Christ."

How? How can Christ be touched by my petty actions?

Any conduct that *destroys* a believer's peace of mind frustrates Christ's purposes in his life—opposes the very reason for which Christ died.

But, did not Christ die to save us from our sins? And hasn't this believer been forgiven his sins?

Yes, you are still thinking logically, but not completely. Christ not only died to save men from the natural consequences of their sins; Christ also gave Himself, and continues to give Himself, for the sanctification of the believer—for the continual spiritual development of those who trust Him. We sin, and that against Christ, if we hinder the fulfilment of His purpose in the life of even the weakest believer.

Then, aware of the prize to be lost or won, the Apostle Paul makes an exemplary resolution.

- d. A HIGH-MINDED RESOLUTION v. 13 (VI. A 9) In the last verse of chapter eight, the Apostle Paul expresses his own determination concerning the

problem he has been discussing: "If meat causeth my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh forevermore" (v. 13 A.R.V.). The Apostle will not move an inch from the truth, but he is willing to go to any length—even the length of his life-time—in self-denial that will aid the cause of Christ. It is as though he were saying: If need be, I will lay my head on the block of self-denial, but I will bind my heart forever with the welfare of those for whom Christ died.

Lord Alfred Tennyson has put Paul's thought into beautiful lines of poetry:

*Love took up the harp of Life, and
smote on all the chords with might;
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling,
pass'd in music out of sight.*

It was Paul's willingness to smite the chord of self that produced the beautiful music in his life, thrilling and challenging us even today.

With his challenging appeal still ringing in our ears, the Apostle Paul illustrates the principle he has just stated by recalling the practices and procedures of his own ministry. This he does in the ninth chapter.

RIGHTS SACRIFICED FOR CHRIST 9:1-27 (VI. B 1)

In chapter eight the Apostle Paul set forth the first of several great principles he is proposing for the regulation of questions of conscience: Since indulgence may harm the weak, love must regulate liberty. Paul also declared his willingness to take his own medicine—to live by his own principle.

Now, in chapter nine, Paul carries the principle from consideration of the weak believer to consideration of the commission the Lord has laid upon each of His followers. In establishing his second principle, Paul uses himself, and his well-known policies at Corinth, as an example. He leads up to this second principle by asking seventeen rhetorical questions. Then he goes on to illustrate the principle by reminding the Corinthians of two athletic events held every second year in their own city.

1. Seventeen Rhetorical Questions 9:1-18 (VI. B 2)

Seventeen is a large number, so the Apostle wastes no time in

getting started. From the way he asks each question, it is obvious that he expects agreement.

- a. AM I NOT FREE? v. 1b (VI. B 3) The Apostle Paul was free in many ways. He enjoyed Roman citizenship with its many privileges. He could not be made a slave. Moreover, he was not "bound to a wife." Most important of all he enjoyed Christian liberty. Paul had been set free by Christ (Gal. 5:1). Like the "strong" in Corinth, he could say: "All things are lawful unto me" (6:12). Do not forget, however, that he liked to refer to himself as a bond-servant or slave of Jesus Christ (Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1). He knew that to be a slave of Christ was the only way to enjoy real freedom.
- b. AM I NOT AN APOSTLE? v. 1a (VI. B 4) By this question Paul is claiming to be an apostle—one sent by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself—one occupying a very special position. By his next two questions and their obvious answers, Paul proves the reality of his apostleship.
- c. HAVE I NOT SEEN JESUS OUR LORD? v. 1c (VI. B 5) The Book of Acts clearly states one test of an apostle: he was a witness of the resurrection (Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33). Paul had seen the risen Saviour on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:17). This verse (9:1) shows us that there are no apostles in the New Testament sense today. When we study chapter fourteen, we will learn that the same is true of prophets.
- d. ARE YE NOT MY WORK IN THE LORD? v. 1d (VI. B 6) Paul reminds the Corinthians that he was the one who began the work in Corinth (3:6-10; 4:15). Others might doubt his apostleship, but there was no excuse for those in Corinth to do so (v. 2). Indeed, to do so, would be to question what God had done through the Apostle. They themselves were "the seal" of his apostleship. (cf. Rom. 4:11; II Tim. 2:19)
- e. HAVE WE NO RIGHT TO EAT AND TO DRINK? v. 4 (VI. B 7) By the preceding questions, Paul has

shown that he is an apostle. Now, by additional questions, he establishes his right to receive food and drink from those he serves.

- f. HAVE WE NO RIGHT TO LEAD ABOUT A WIFE? v. 5 (VI. B 8) Peter, James and other apostles took their wives with them as they traveled from church to church. (The historian Eu-se'bi-us says Philip was married.) The churches had made a practice of entertaining these apostles and also their wives, when they accompanied them.
- g. HAVE WE NOT A RIGHT TO FORBEAR WORKING? v. 6 (VI. B 9) Paul and Barnabas had as much right to expect material help from believers as the other servants of God. The only difference was that Paul did not use his right. The aim of his argument is to show that his right to support is reasonable. He proves it by asking several other questions.
- h. WHAT SOLDIER EVER SERVES AT HIS OWN CHARGES? v. 7a (VI. B 10) None! Every soldier expects to receive his rations, uniform, salary, allowances, etc. Just as a soldier makes war with the enemy, so the Apostle wages war against the enemy of Christ and His disciples. He should be supported in this conflict.
- i. WHO PLANTETH A VINEYARD AND EATETH NOT THE FRUIT THEREOF? v. 7b (VI. B 11) No one! The owner and the tenant share in the fruit. Just as the husbandman plants a vineyard, so the Apostle had planted a church. (cf. Mk. 12:1-12)
- j. WHO FEEDETH A FLOCK AND EATETH NOT THE MILK? v. 7c (VI. B 12) No one! The shepherd naturally takes his share of the milk. Just as a shepherd tends his flock, so the Apostle has had the care of a spiritual flock. Common sense indicates that the workman, whatever the nature of his work, should be supported by his work. (cf. II Tim. 2:3-6) The Apostle was an early champion of workman's compensation.
- k. DO I SPEAK THESE THINGS AFTER THE MANNER OF MEN? v. 8a (VI. B 13) Was Paul using human reason

in saying these things? No. If further illustration were needed, Paul could give Scriptural proof. His illustrations from nature have Spiritual applications.

- l. SAITH NOT THE LAW ALSO THE SAME THINGS? v. 8b (VI. B 14) Yes, it does. Moses laid down this principle in a slightly different form: "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is treading," that is, threshing (Deut. 25:4). This commandment has an immediate literal application which many farmers do not observe today. Yet, this commandment is just as applicable to man. Paul indicates this by his next question.
- m. IS IT FOR OXEN THAT GOD CARETH? v. 9c (VI. B 15) The form of the question demands "No" for an answer. Actually, God *is* concerned about oxen and all other beasts, but He is much more concerned about people. (cf. Deut. 22:1-4; Prov. 12:10; Jonah 4:11; Mt. 6:26; 10:29-31)
- n. SAITH HE IT ASSUREDLY FOR OUR SAKE? v. 10a (VI. B 16) If it is not "assuredly" for our sake, it certainly shows a principle which applies to human beings more than to animals. The man who uses oxen for ploughing—as was done in ancient Greece and is done in rural India today—and the man who uses oxen for threshing, does so in hope of sharing the harvest (v. 10). He will be paid for his work in kind.
- o. IS IT A GREAT MATTER IF WE SHALL REAP YOUR CARNAL THINGS? v. 11 (VI. B 17) The material things needed for a minister's livelihood are insignificant compared to spiritual blessings. The person who faithfully teaches spiritual truths should not be denied his material needs, especially by those whom he teaches.

May I be permitted to make an immediate application of this truth? If you are gaining spiritual help from your local church, you should give some financial help so that others may benefit too. Think and pray about it. This is what the Apostle Paul is telling the Corinthians.

- p. IF OTHERS PARTAKE OF THIS RIGHT OVER YOU, DO NOT WE YET MORE? v. 12 (VI. B 18) No doubt, the "others" who claimed this right were Jewish teachers who followed Paul to Corinth. These men made extravagant claims, but after all, they had only followed where Paul had begun. Paul had a better claim to the believers' support than they had.

Now, after establishing his right to support, Paul clearly states why he did not claim his right: "That we may cause no hindrance to the Gospel of Christ" (v. 12b). Then, to make a sure thing surer, Paul adds two more reasons why he has a right to claim their support. The first reason is given in the form of a question. The second is the teaching of Christ Himself.

- q. KNOW YE NOT THAT THEY THAT MINISTER . . . EAT OF THE THINGS OF THE TEMPLE? v. 13 (VI. B 19) This was true of all temples. It was true of the great Temple of Aphrodite in Corinth. It was also true of the Temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem. The Book of Leviticus tells which parts of the sacrificed animals were to be eaten by the priests (Lev. 7:7-10). In the same way, says Paul, the Lord has directed that those who proclaim the Gospel, on a full-time basis, should receive their living from the Gospel, that is, from those who hear the Gospel (v. 14; cf. Mt. 10:10; Lk. 10:7).

By means of these seventeen questions, the Apostle Paul establishes his apostleship and his right to material support from the church. But having proved his right, he forthwith renounces it and explains why his goal is not money, but men—men won to Christ (v. 15).

The driving force of Paul's ministry is not wages, but a conviction that he is God-sent (v. 16). The reward of his ministry is not his expectation of receiving, but his joy in giving the Gospel without cost to others (vs. 17, 18). Paul does not regard himself as a workman who can expect wages, but as a bondservant who can claim no reward for his work. Yet, he is receiving a great reward. What is it? The privilege of renouncing his rights so that others might receive the Gospel without cost.

2. **One All-Embracing Principle 9:19-23 (VI. B 20)** It is good for a Christian to know what rights he possesses. It is also good for him to know the rights of other Christians. It is always good to guard the rights of others. However, mere knowledge of our rights is not enough. Sometimes, love should move us to lay aside our rights. Indeed, when they would harm others and hinder the spread of the Gospel, we *must* lay aside our own rights. In this, our Lord Jesus Christ has given us an example (Rom. 15:1-3). Likewise, it is helpful to study the life of the Apostle Paul in this respect. There were times when he used his rights (Acts 22:25-29; 25:11) and times when he did not use his rights (Acts 16:22-24, 37). These passages refer to Paul's rights as a Roman citizen. In the same way there were times when he used his rights as an apostle, and times when he did not. In particular, Paul did not use his right to financial support when he felt it might hinder the spread of the Gospel (v. 12). His example is a good one to follow. India, today, needs many more men and women who do secular work to fill their stomachs, but who devote all their remaining energies to the spread of the Gospel. The main purpose of LIT courses is to help such men and women to become equipped for this kind of service. Even while we are preparing for a service like that of Paul at Corinth, let us not forget that those in full-time service must be supported by Christians who are earning money.

Now Paul is ready to announce a second great principle: Since indulgence may hinder the spread of the Gospel, the Christian must be all things to all men (v. 22b). Is this the same as saying: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do"? As we note the context in which Paul sets this principle, we will discover that it means the very opposite. Paul's watchword was not conformity to convention, but service to mankind.

Although he was "free"—remember his first question—Paul made himself "a slave unto all," to win them for Christ (v. 19). Paul then specifies three distinct classes of people; those "under the law," those "without law" and those who are "weak." The secret of Paul's success was his willingness and ability to understand these groups of his day and to present the Gospel in the way each could understand.

By those "under the law" Paul meant the Jews—the

descendants of those to whom God first gave the law. Although freed from "the law of Moses" by "the law of Christ" (i.e. by love, Rom. 13:8), Paul avoids giving offence to the Jews who scrupulously keep these regulations. (cf. Acts 16:3; 18:18; 21:20-26)

By "those without law," Paul meant the Gentiles. In dealing with them he forgot "the law of Moses" (see Acts 14:15-17; 17:22-31), although he was not lawless in his own life, but loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ.

By "the weak," Paul meant those with little knowledge who have scruples about things that are morally indifferent (chap. 8). Paul sought to adapt himself to each one of these classes, without compromising God's truth.

Let us not miss the application to our own lives. Even our Lord was criticised for being a Friend of publicans and sinners (Lk. 7:34). Like Him, we are to be friendly with sinners, while avoiding compromise with their sin. Yet, we must not offend a weak brother in our friendliness with idol-worshippers. We should avoid romantic friendships with unsaved members of the opposite sex. Instead, we should make friendships like those of the Lord Jesus. The Apostle Paul was prepared to sacrifice every one of his natural rights as a Christian and an apostle, in order that he might win all classes of men to the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Two Athletic Illustrations 9:24-27 (VI. B 21) We mentioned in LESSON THREE (III. G 3) that Corinth was a sporting centre. Every second year, the Isthmian games, named for the isthmus on which Corinth stood and second only in importance to the Olympic Games, drew huge throngs from far and wide to the great stadium at Corinth. Some of the contests were cruel, but many of the athletic events are popular even today. Paul now speaks about foot-racing and boxing, two features of the games that were very popular.

- a. **THE RUNNER AND THE PRIZE vs. 24-26a (VI. B 22)**
In the Isthmian races, all the contestants ran, but only the winner received a prize. In the Christian race, everyone who runs can win a prize. However, to be successful, the runner must keep his eyes on the goal (Heb. 12:1,2); he must run with determina-

tion; he cannot turn aside for even a moment; he must run to win. That was the way Paul ran the Christian race—with strict self-discipline. That is the way we too should run. “So run,” advised Paul, “that ye may obtain.”

The prize given to the successful runner was made of leaves or flowers. This garland was not placed around the neck but on the head of the winner. Like our beautiful Indian garlands, these awards were primarily valued for what they represented, for they faded very quickly. After a day or two, the winner of the Isthmian races had nothing to show for his effort. The disciplined runner in the Christian race, on the other hand, is competing for an “incorruptible” crown. Peter calls it a “crown of glory that fadeth not away” (I Peter 5:4). This is an eternal reward that will be given by Christ at His Judgment Seat to those who fulfil their responsibilities as Christian workers. Paul made it his definite aim to win this crown (v. 26b; cf. Phil. 3:10-14). The garland-crowns of the Bible (not eternal diadems), are an interesting study. Read II Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; I Peter 5:4; and Revelation 2:10.



What is Paul illustrating by this athletic contest? Is he instructing us concerning salvation? No! A person does not compete for salvation. In the whole of this ninth chapter, Paul is discussing the Christian worker and his motives. He is encouraging easy-going Corinthian Christians to put forth every effort to win a reward.

- b. THE BOXER AND DISQUALIFICATION vs. 26b-27 (VI. B 23) Paul also likens himself to a boxer competing for the Isthmian championship. The boxer knows

that he is in a real contest—that he must make every blow count. It is useless to hit the air instead of the opponent. But who is Paul's opponent? Paul's own human nature; Paul's carnality. If Paul the spiritual man is to win, Paul the carnal man must be defeated. (cf. C. F.: II. Ki; X. A 6-8) The Apostle is determined to subdue his bodily desires that his spiritual gifts may be used for Christ. He is determined to discipline his body so that he will be its master in every situation—so that he will not be disqualified by fouls.

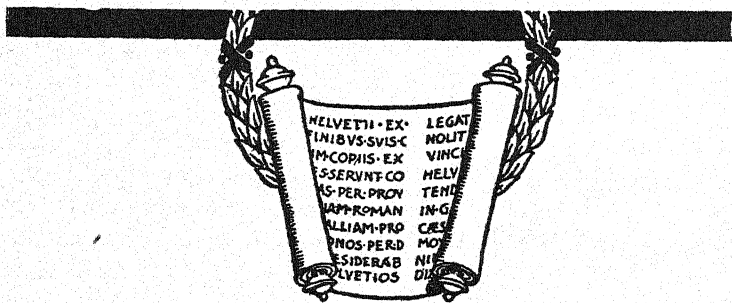


Every sport has its rules, and every winner must observe them (cf. II Tim. 2:5). A good sportsman respects the rules and tries to observe them. He does not dread defeat, but he does dread the shame of being disqualified. Paul actually dreaded the possibility of being disqualified in his service for Christ. That is what the word "castaway" means—a person disqualified for breaking rules. Paul's salvation was not at stake. It is his service that is in danger. At any time, he could fail to observe the rules of discipline and thus disqualify himself as a contestant for a crown. Nothing can disqualify Paul as a believer, but self-indulgence can disqualify him as a worker. He is greatly concerned—so concerned that he gave up his normal rights as a Christian (chap. 8) and as a worker (chap. 9) so that he could fight a good fight and run a good race. At the end of his life he knew he had won the prize for which he longed (II Tim. 4:7,8).

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 8:1-9:27 (VI. C 1)

Our present lesson has covered two chapters of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians—chapters eight and nine. At first glance, it seems that the Apostle is discussing two unrelated subjects: meats offered to idols and his own qualifications for apostleship.

On closer study, however, we see that Paul is pursuing one theme throughout. Indeed, our next lesson will reveal that he has not yet finished with this great theme of Christian liberty controlled by love. In chapter eight, Paul is concerned with Christian liberty controlled by love for our Christian brethren; while, in chapter nine, he is concerned with Christian liberty as controlled by love for Christ and His work. In each chapter, he uses himself as an example; in each chapter, he formulates a principle. Do you recall these matters?



Many Scripture portions were originally written
on scrolls like the one pictured above.

EXERCISES

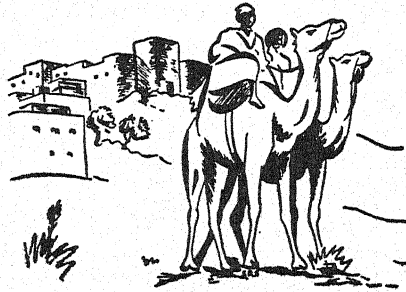
Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. The theme of LESSON SIX is a) Christian marriage and divorce; b) Christian liberty and love; c) Christian worship and idols; d) Christian cliques and unity. (VI. Intro.)
2. Our lesson is Paul's answer to the Corinthians' a) second question; b) third question; c) first question; d) last question. (VI. Intro.)
3. The question the Corinthians asked the Apostle Paul was: a) Is it right to marry a divorced woman? b) Should we support our present pastor? c) Do you approve of our appointment of Chloe as deaconess? d) Is it right to eat food offered to an idol? (VI. A 1)
4. Paul answers the Corinthians a) with an unequivocal "No"; b) with a rather hesitant "Yes"; c) with a set of principles; d) with a non-committal reply. (VI. A 1)
5. Paul's answer to this question a) concerns only the Corinthians; b) has no relevancy to modern life; c) is a guide for all problems of conscience; d) is an excellent theological treatise, although impractical. (VI. A 1)
6. This is a problem that Paul discusses a) nowhere else in his writings; b) again when he writes to the Ephesians; c) in Rom. 14:1-15:13; d) in II Cor. 8:1-9:11. (VI. A 1)
7. What should be the motivating power in a Christian's conduct, especially as it touches the life of a fellow Christian? a) Money. b) Knowledge. c) Knowledge and love. d) The mixed motives of sympathy and fellow feeling. (VI. A 2)
8. Human knowledge and understanding a) will solve all problems; b) is unimportant; c) is sufficient except for "the weak"; d) will always remain incomplete and thus imperfect. (VI. A 3)
9. Sacrifices made at Greek temples a) were of animals whose flesh sometimes was sold to the public; b) were bloodless; c) were of human beings, often Christians; d) were of animals offered to the god only. (VI. A 3)
10. Conscience is a) an innate sense of right and wrong by which we judge conduct; b) a feeling of shame; c) a sense

- of sin produced in our minds by the Holy Spirit; d) personal commitment to Christ. (VI. A 5)
11. Violating one's conscience a) is impossible; b) is believing one thing and doing another; c) is one way to grow in grace and to be *built up* in faith; d) is an act of the devil. (VI. A 7)
 12. Thoughtless, selfish conduct a) affects only the person involved; b) affects the Lord Jesus Christ also; c) primarily affects weaker Christians; d) only affects those who glory in their liberty in Christ. (VI. A 8)
 13. In relation to weak Christians, Paul determines a) to do as he pleases regardless of how it affects them; b) to refrain from any act that would cause them to stumble; c) to force them to understand the truth; d) to excommunicate them. (VI. A 9)
 14. In chapter nine, the Apostle Paul sets forth a second principle regarding the regulation of Christian liberty. He says: a) Since our indulgence of Christian liberty may harm a weak brother, we must regulate our liberty by love for him. b) Since our indulgence may hinder the spread of the Gospel, we must be all things to all men. c) Since our indulgence may split the church, we must dissolve all our cliques. d) Since our indulgence may come to the attention of the civil authorities, we must bribe the police. (VI. B 20)
 15. What was "the seal" of Paul's apostleship? a) The Corinthians. b) His miracles. c) His understanding of the Scriptures. d) His visions. (VI. B 6)
 16. God commanded the Israelites a) not to use oxen for threshing; b) not to muzzle the ox while threshing; c) not to let the ox eat while threshing; d) not to thresh, but to eat whole wheat bread. (VI. B 14)
 17. The Apostle Peter a) was unmarried; b) was a widower; c) did all his preaching in Jerusalem; d) sometimes took his wife with him on extended preaching missions. (VI. B 8)
 18. The Apostle Paul made himself the servant of all classes and types of men a) in order to become popular; b) in order to increase his income; c) in order to gain a high position in the Corinthian church; d) in order to win as many as possible to Christ. (VI. B 20)
 19. The reward of the faithful Christian worker a) is an "incorruptible" crown, i.e. a reward that will last throughout eternity; b) is eternal life, i.e. salvation throughout eternity; c) is eternal peace of mind, i.e. freedom from

care in this life and the life to come; d) is immortality,
i.e. freedom from death. (VI. B 22)

20. Paul's special anxiety was that a) he might be martyred
before his work was finished; b) he might lose his sal-
vation after preaching to others; c) he might be disqual-
ified in his service for Christ and thus lose his reward;
d) the Apostle Peter might win more souls than he did.
(VI. B 23)



1. b; 2. a; 3. d; 4. c; 5. c; 6. c; 7. c; 8. d; 9. a; 10. a; 11. b;
12. b; 13. b; 14. b; 15. a; 16. b; 17. d; 18. d; 19. a; 20. c.

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Six

You may use your Bible and text-book in completing this examination. Quote proof texts whenever you can to give substance to your statements. Ten marks will be given for each question correctly and adequately answered. Post your finished examination by first class mail to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P., India.

1. What should be the relationship between personal knowledge and brotherly love? In what ways is love greater than knowledge?
2.
 - a. What theme gives unity to I Corinthian 8 and 9?
 - b. What was the question asked Paul that caused him to expound this theme?
3. How should a Christian with a good knowledge of God's Word look upon weak Christians?
4. Answer the Christian who says: "I can see no harm in going to the cinema. I know it has bad effects on some weak Christians, but I am a mature Christian. I have a right to go if I want, don't I?"
5. Answer the Christian who says: "There is no harm in attending Hindu religious festivals provided one does not take part in idol worship."
6. Fill in the blank spaces below.
 - a. "Am I not an apostle?...Have I not seen?"
 - b. "Are not you my... in the Lord?"
 - c. "Have we [no right] to eat and to.....?"
 - d. Those who "wait at the altar are partakers"
 - e. Those who "preach the Gospel should....."
7. What was Paul's ambition in relation to his apostleship?
8. What was Paul prepared to do in order to win men for Christ? State the principle he practised and mention at least three things he denied himself.
9. In what way is the prize which God gives to the faithful Christian greater than that given to the winner in the Greek games?
10. What is the meaning of the word "castaway" in I Cor. 9: 27? What relationship does it have to salvation and rewards?

SUBSTITUTE QUESTION

11. How does a Christian's knowledge of God differ from that of a Hindu?

LESSON SEVEN

PAST TRADITIONS AND PRESENT TEMPTATIONS



ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FROM CORINTH

7:1-11:34

CELIBACY, MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND SERVICE

7:1-40 (See Lesson V)

FOOD SACRIFICED TO IDOLS

8:1-13 (See Lesson VI)

RIGHTS SACRIFICED FOR CHRIST 9:1-27 (See Lesson VI)

A LESSON FROM HISTORY

10:1-13

1. Historic Facts 10:1-10

a. UNIVERSAL PROVISION 10:1-4

- 1) THE CLOUD v. 1a
- 2) THE SEA v. 1b
- 3) BAPTISM UNTO MOSES v. 2
- 4) SPIRITUAL FOOD v. 3
- 5) SPIRITUAL DRINK v. 4

b. MAJORITY FAILURE 10:5-10

- 1) BECAUSE OF IDOLATRY v. 7
- 2) BECAUSE OF IMMORALITY v. 8
- 3) BECAUSE OF PRESUMPTION v. 9
- 4) BECAUSE OF MURMURING v. 10

2. Spiritual Lessons 10:11-13

- a. SELF-CONFIDENCE LEADS TO FAILURE 10:12
- b. GOD PERMITS TEMPTATION 10:13
- c. GOD PROPORTIONS TEMPTATION 10:13
- d. GOD PROVIDES ESCAPE FROM TEMPTATION 10:13

A LESSON FROM THE LORD'S SUPPER 19:14-22

- 1. Significance of the Lord's Supper 10:16-18
- 2. Significance of Pagan Feasts 10:19,20
- 3. Consecration of Christ's Disciples 10:21,22

A SUMMATION OF PRINCIPLES AND DIRECTIVES

- 1. Seven Principles 10:23,24,31-11:1
- 2. Two Directives 10:25-30

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 10:1-11:1

LESSON SEVEN deals with I Corinthians 10:1-11:1. Please read this portion of Scripture until you are thoroughly acquainted with the contents.

You will note that the first word of chapter ten is a connective. It shows that the chapter before us is a continuation of chapter nine. Although Paul shifts his line of thought, he is still discussing the limits of Christian liberty.

He had closed chapter nine with a warning that the believer can disqualify himself from receiving a reward for his

service. Now, he cites an example from the history of the children of Israel in the wilderness.



FEAST IN AN IDOL TEMPLE

Greek and Roman diners reclined on couches extending around three sides of a table. This couch, and also a dining room containing such a couch, was called a tri-clin'-i-um. cf. Amos 6:4; Lk. 7:38; Jn. 13:23-25.

A LESSON FROM HISTORY 10:1-13 (VII. A 1)

Christianity has a past as well as a present and a future. Although the Corinthian Christians were recent converts, they had become heirs to a Book filled with the wisdom of the ages. This Book, the Bible, contains divinely-selected facts from the past. They are first of all "things" that "happened" (v. 11a). That is to say, the events recorded in the Bible are historical. In addition, "they are written for our admonition" (v. 11b; cf v. 6). In other words, God directed the recording of these events to teach spiritual lessons. It is God's plan that we learn from His Book, in order that we need not undergo the expense of learning everything from experience.

1. **Historic Facts 10:1-10 (VII. A 2)** For the sake of those Corinthian Christians who felt they were strong and privileged and thus beyond temptation, the Apostle cites well-known incidents from the wilderness experiences of Israel.

a. **UNIVERSAL PROVISION 10:1-4 (VII. A 3)** From the many incidents of the Old Testament, Paul selects five providences of God that were designed to make the children of Israel happy and victorious. These free gifts were given to every Israelite. You will note that Paul stresses the word "all" that he may make a contrast when he speaks of the Israelites' use of God's gifts. Paul explains the literal meaning of each of God's provisions for Israel, in order that he may apply the lesson to those at Corinth who had received similar provisions from God.

(1) The Cloud v. 1a (VII. A 4) Paul says, "All our fathers were under the cloud." He is referring to the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21,22; 14:19,24; 33:9,10; Num. 12:5; 14:14; Deut. 31:15; Neh. 9:12, 19; Ps. 99:7) that fulfilled three essential needs of every Israelite:

- (a) GUIDANCE through the trackless desert
- (b) PROTECTION from the sun by day and from darkness at night

- (c) CONCEALMENT from their enemies (Ex. 14:19)
These are God's provisions for everyone who believes in Him.
- (2) The Sea v. 1b (VII. A 5) Paul goes on to say:
"All passed through the sea." By this state-



ment he is calling to mind the historic crossing at the Red Sea. As recorded in Exodus, this story has three parts:

- (a) Israel's Miraculous Crossing (Ex. 14:21,22)
- (b) Egypt's Utter Defeat (Ex. 14:23-31)
- (c) Israel's Song of Deliverance (Ex. 15:1-21)

The crossing from Egypt was by a one-way road. No Israelite ever went back to his former life, although some wanted to do so (Num. 14:4). The sea meant complete *deliverance* from their old life of bondage, and initiation into a new divinely-sustained life.



- (3) Baptism Unto Moses v. 2 (VII. A 6) Now Paul interprets the Israelites' experiences as a foreshadowing of Christian baptism. He says, "[They] were *all* baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The cloud and the sea were the means of their exit and their entrance. By the one they left their old life. By the other they entered into their new life. Through the cloud and the sea, they were inseparably united to their new leader, Moses. These are the elements in Christian baptism that unite the believer with Christ.
- (4) Spiritual Food v. 3 (VII. A 7) Paul has just spoken of a new beginning that involved a new relationship. Now he speaks of a new sustaining—a new source of sustenance: "[They] did *all* eat the same spiritual meat." Paul is referring to the *manna* which fell daily during the wanderings of the children of Israel in the wilderness. (cf. Ex. 16:15,31,33,35; Num. 11:6-9; Deut. 8:3,16; Josh. 5:12; Neh. 9:20; Ps. 78:24) *Manna* was "spiritual" food in the sense that it was God-given (Ps. 78:25) and that it had a spiritual meaning (Jn. 6:31-33).

- (5) Spiritual Drink v. 4 (VII. A 8) Paul continues, "And [they] did *all* drink the same spiritual drink." On at least two occasions, God provided water out of the solid rock to quench the thirst of His people (Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:8-11). This was natural water such as we all drink daily, but it was supplied in a supernatural manner.

Paul goes on to specifically state that this water had a spiritual meaning: "That Rock was Christ." Paul is saying that the smitten Rock of the wilderness was typical of Christ. In making this statement he testifies to the existence of Christ before His birth in Bethlehem, and to His vicarious death on the cross of Calvary. Christ Himself claimed to be the Giver of the Water of Life (Jn. 7:37-39).

Just as the cloud and sea correspond to Christian baptism, so the *manna* and water correspond to the Lord's Supper. In Old Testament times as well as New Testament times, the Lord Jesus Christ has been the source of God's provision for His people. The Jews had the old Testament Ordinances; Christians have the New Testament Ordinances; but Christ is the Author and Fulfiller of them all.

- b. THE MAJORITY FAILED 10:5-10 (VII. A 9) In spite of the wonderful provision God made for the children of Israel, their history is a story of colossal failure. Every Israelite had spiritual privileges comparable to those of Christians today. Paul emphasized this by the four-times-repeated word "all." Now he contrasts the completeness of God's provision with the all-but-complete failure of man's response: "But with *many of them* God was *not* well pleased" (v. 5a). The majority failed to experience God's promises (Num. 26:65; Heb. 3:17). Only an insignificant minority of two faithful men actually entered the Promised Land. All the others perished

along the wayside. Why? Paul mentions four reasons:

- (1) Because of Idolatry v. 7 (VII. A 10) On many occasions after their wonderful deliverance at the Red Sea, the Israelites turned from God to idolatry. Even while Moses was on Mount Sinai receiving the Law from the hand of God, the waiting company persuaded Aaron to make them an idol (Ex. 32:1-35). Near the end of their journey, many men of Israel took part in the idol feasts of Moab and were led into



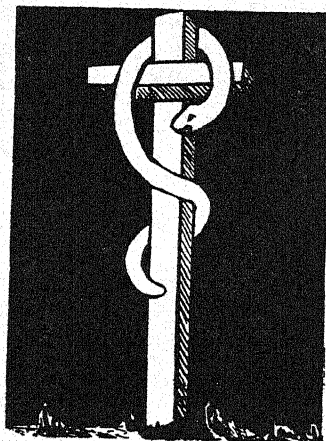
fornication. Once they had disobeyed God, many Israelites were persuaded to worship Ba'al-Pe'or, also called Che'mosh, a Moabite idol (Num. 25:1-9). Time and again they violated their covenant with God as summarized in the Ten Commandments. God had said: "Thou shalt have *no other gods* before Me. Thou shalt *not* make unto thee any graven image . . . Thou shalt *not* bow down thyself to them, nor serve them. . . . Thou shalt *not* commit adultery" Ex. 20:3-5, 14. Note how disobedience to the last named commandment led to disobedience to the first two commandments. For us to disobey these same commandments is to ensure the same spiritual failure.

Temptation to idolatry is not a thing of the past. Modern gods produced by the mind are as destructive of spirituality as ancient gods produced by the hand. The Apostle John's final warning to every believer is this: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (I Jn. 5:21).

(2) Because of Immorality v. 8 (VII. A 11) Immorality in the church at Corinth was one of the reasons this epistle was written (cf. Lesson VI). At the temple of Aphrodite in Corinth, idolatry and immorality were inseparable. We who live in India do not need to look very far away for present-day parallels. Both Exodus 32 and Numbers 25 emphasize the disgusting results of idolatry rather than the actual worship. The Christians at Corinth had no desire for idol worship itself. All they wanted was to take part in feasts connected with idol worship. Paul is using the history of Israel to show the danger of drifting into the unholy practices that surround idolatry. He wants the Corinthian Christians to keep far away from all such things. In Galatians 5:13 he says: "Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh."

(3) Because of Presumption v. 9 (VII. A 12) Paul's reference to the serpents identifies this comment with Numbers 21:1-9. The people

tried God's patience by their lack of faith. In Exodus 17:1-7 the people also tempted God by asking: "Is the Lord among us or not?" They sinned in trying to force God to perform a miracle instead of trust-



ing His promises. The Lord Jesus Christ would not permit Satan to draw Him into such a relationship with God. In resisting the temptation, He quoted Deuteronomy 6:16: "Ye shall

not tempt the Lord your God." (cf. Mt. 4:7; Lk. 4:12) Believers should run away from questionable things, but many Corinthians were approaching as near as they could without actually falling into sin. Paul warns: Don't tempt God as the children of Israel did.

- (4) Because of Murmuring v. 10 (VII. A 13) In Numbers 14:36-38; 16:11-35 and 16:41-49, grumblers are punished. The grumbler actually is questioning the goodness of God. His murmuring is rooted in unbelief. If he really believed God, he would "give thanks" for "this is the will of God" (I Thes. 5:17, 18). Murmuring is a sin we all tend to regard too lightly. Paul's advice is this: "Do all thing without murmurings and disputings" (Phil. 2:14).

2. Spiritual Lessons 10:11-13 (VII. A 14) Paul says that the recorded history of Israel is "for our admonition" (v. 11). And who are those who should be admonished? Those "upon whom the ends of the world are come" (v. 11), or more literally, *"those who live in the overlapping of the ages."* Christians live in the new age ushered in by the resurrection of Christ. Yet, we also live in an age of unbelief and evil and failure. Eternal life is our heritage; yet, we experience the daily deterioration of our physical bodies. Like the children of Israel, we are actually living where the old life of Egypt and the new life of Canaan overlap. For this reason, the wilderness experiences of Israel are especially applicable to our lives. Paul reminded believers at Corinth of specific failures of the children of Israel, in order that he might point out spiritual lessons that apply to their own situation. What are these lessons?

- a. **SELF-CONFIDENCE LEADS TO FAILURE 10:12 (VII. A 15)** Paul is addressing a warning to those Corinthians holding a viewpoint somewhat as follows: We have been baptized into Christ Jesus our Lord. We regularly partake at the Lord's table and so come under His protection. We are united with Christ in the closest of relationships. For this reason, we are perfectly safe from the temptations of sin. We can eat meat in an idol temple without harm.

The Apostle Paul disagrees; he points out that history does not support their stand. God's people who have had the greatest privileges have also been subjected to the greatest temptations. What's more, many of them have failed. The provisions of God are no guarantee of victory. Your very confidence should be a warning signal. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (v. 12). Perseverance must replace presumption; vigilance must replace self-confidence.

Paul follows this basic warning with further teaching about temptation.

- b. GOD PERMITS TEMPTATION 10:13 (VII. A 16) Everyone of us undergoes temptation, for it is the common lot of all mankind. The believer is no exception (Heb. 12:4-8). God permits us to be tried and tempted in order to prove our fidelity to Him. If we believe and trust Him, the enticement to sin will only discipline and strengthen us. But there is danger that we may think of God as the author or originator of the temptation. Both in the Old Testament (Eccl. 15:11,12) and in the New Testament (James 1:13,14), the believer is warned against such blasphemy. God allows man to be tested and tried (e. g. Abraham), but He never incites man to evil. This is the work of Satan. (cf. Job 2:1-10; Lk. 22:31,32)
- c. GOD PROPORTIONS TEMPTATION 10:13 (VII. A 17) Whether our testing is from God or from the devil, it is measured by God so that it will be for our good and not for our destruction. (cf. Job 1:10) Thus, all temptations prove God's faithfulness. This is the fact that Paul emphasizes: "God is faithful." His actions are always consistent with His character. He is constantly promoting the spiritual growth and well-being of His children.
- d. GOD PROVIDES ESCAPE FROM TEMPTATION 10:13 (VII. A 18) Literally, Paul says that God provides "a way out" of temptation for those who trust Him. God never allows us to be helpless victims of our circumstances. Yet, His "way out" is not that of

pampering, but that of help in the midst of the trial. By using God's help, temptation can be mastered. James is giving very similar advice to that of the Apostle Paul when he says: "Submit yourselves therefore unto God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

A LESSON FROM THE LORD'S SUPPER 10:14-22 (VII. B 1) After his powerful teaching based on the history of Israel, Paul gathers together his long discussion about "meats offered to idols." By way of review, he formulates principles relating to various circumstances in which Christians have to make decisions. The first of these has to do with meals in idol temples. In this case, Paul pronounces a stern prohibition. Such participation is impossible. Why? Because it amounts to disloyalty to Christ.

The Apostle Paul defends his decision by pointing out the basic significance of the Lord's Supper. Just as he had warned Corinthian Christians to "flee immorality" (6:18), now he appeals to them to "flee from idolatry" (10:14), because it encourages immorality. In both of these cases, God's "way out" (10:13) is to flee—to run away from temptation. The Christian should have nothing to do with idol temples.

1. Significance of the Lord's Supper 10:16-18 (VII. B 2) Verse sixteen contains two questions. Both questions demand "Yes" for an answer. In this passage, Paul mentions the cup before the bread, although the Lord Jesus apparently broke the bread before He gave the cup to His disciples (11:23-25). Let us note the important words in this verse before we attempt to understand its meaning:

"The cup of blessing": The communion cup is called "the cup of blessing," because our Lord thanked the Father for it, and consecrated it (i.e. set it apart) as a memorial of His death.

"Which we bless": This is a Hebrew expression meaning "for which we give thanks" in imitation of our Lord (Mk. 14:22; Lk. 22:19).

"We": Who does this simple word refer to here? Is it an exclusive "*we*" referring to Paul and his co-workers, like the "*we*" in 3:9? Or is it an inclusive "*we*," meaning Paul and all those to whom he sends this message? Verse seventeen

provides the answer: "*We*" refers to all those who partake of the "one bread" of the Communion—all those who are a part of the "one body" of Christ, that is, of the true church.

"*Communion*": This word means fellowship. By participation in the Lord's Supper, believers express their close association with one another and with Christ.

"*The blood of Christ*": In Scripture the word "blood" always refers to life being given or taken by violent death. "Communion of the blood of Christ" means that those who partake of the cup have a common interest in the benefits which come to us through Christ's death.

"*The body of Christ*": Christ surrendered His physical body to violent death on the cross for us. As we eat the bread of the Lord's Supper, we witness to our sharing of the blessings which come to us through Christ's death. Those who share Christ's gifts are spoken of as "members of His body" (Eph. 5:28-30,32).

Now let us consider the message of verse sixteen as a whole. It is an explanation of the Holy Communion, which Paul will deal with in detail in the next chapter. (cf. C. F. III. C 8) Here Paul merely means to show that our relationships with others, Christian and non-Christian, are regulated by our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. This relationship with Christ is demonstrated in the solemn ceremony of Communion. Through the symbolism of broken bread and poured-out wine, Jesus showed His disciples (and through them, the whole church) the meaning of His death. That death was *for us*. Through partaking of the appointed symbols—the bread and the wine—we remember and bear witness to this fact. Through the Communion service, we claim a close personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. We claim Him both as Saviour and as Lord.

Having called attention to our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul now turns our thoughts to human relationships. In verse seventeen he says: If you are related to the Lord Jesus Christ, you are *also* related to those who are members of His body, the church. How does the Lord's Supper show this fact?

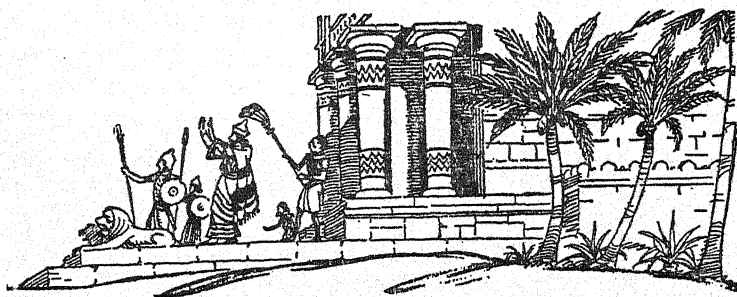
Every one of us agrees with the common proverb: "You are what you eat." Paul implies the same thing. If you

spiritually partake of Christ, you become a part of Christ. "One bread" means "one body." (The subject of unity in diversity will be discussed in chapter twelve.)

Paul uses the temple sacrifices of Israel to establish the next point in his argument (v. 18). He reminds his readers that the Jewish worshipper ate part of the sacrifice. However, he points out that this eating involved more than human fellowship. It involved "communion," that is fellowship, with the "altar" *and the One to whom the altar was dedicated.* For the Jew, this was fellowship with God, just as the Lord's Supper is fellowship with Christ.

2. Significance of Pagan Feasts 10:19,20 (VII. B 3)

Paul leaves it to this reader to draw the parallel between Jewish and pagan sacrifices; he points out only the differences. If an idol is nothing (8:4), why is it wrong to engage in an idol feast? Without quoting Deuteronomy 32:15-17, Paul applies its teaching. Indeed, idols are creations of the imaginations of men, *but* demons are in control of idol worship. Thus, to partake of a meal in an idol temple, is to become involved with demons. By so doing, the believer may lose his identity as a Christian in the eyes of his associates.



3. Consecration of Christ's Disciples 10:21,22 (VII. B 4)

A Christian is one who renounces other loyalties in order to wholly follow Christ. He publishes this fact to the world by sitting at the Communion table. But he cannot sit at the Lord's table one day and at the table of the enemies of his Lord the next day. His *conscience* may permit him to eat temple meat in his own home, but his *consecration* to Christ will not permit him to eat meat in an idol temple. Consecration to Christ involves a choice that is as exclusive as marriage. Christ must be Lord of all. Any practice, pleasure or habit

that spoils the beauty of our identity with Christ, or our loyalty to Christ, is wrong.

A SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES AND DIRECTIVES
10:23-11:1 (VII. C 1) After advising Christians to stay away from temple functions, the Apostle Paul continues his summary by laying down seven general principles and two specific decisions for the regulation of Christian conduct. These principles are in sharp contrast to those of liberal laymen at Corinth. It is as if Paul were saying: "You say, 'all things are lawful' and technically that is true, but I would emphasise a more practical matter: 'All things are not expedient.'" "You say, 'All things are lawful'; but I say, 'All things edify not.'" In this manner, Paul sets down his seven principles and two directives. Let us reword them as principles for testing our own conduct.

1. Seven Principles 10:23,24,31-11:1 (VII. C 2)

- a. **IS MY CONDUCT SUITABLE TO THE OCCASION?** 10:23a (VII. C 3) Every circumstance in which we find ourselves involves other people. I must recognise their presence and act accordingly, so as to produce the best results for them as well as myself. This responsibility is increased when the person involved in my conduct is a fellow-believer. In that case, the onlooker may take my conduct as a guide for his own.
- b. **WILL MY CONDUCT EDIFY** (i. e. build up) **OTHER CHRISTIANS?** 10:23b (VII. C 4; cf. VI. A 7) As a believer, I am a part of God's spiritual temple (the church) which is in the process of being built (Eph. 2:21). My actions must contribute to that building.
- c. **IS MY CONDUCT UNSELFISH?** 10:24 (VII. C 5) This question reaches to the heart of the matter, as we shall see in chapter thirteen. If love is the motivating force of my life, I will not be concerned with the legality of my conduct, but I will be concerned to do that which is helpful to my neighbour. (cf. Lk. 18:22; Rom. 12:13,14; Phil. 2:4)
- d. **IS MY CONDUCT GLORIFYING TO GOD?** 10:31 (VII. C 6) I glorify God by showing forth His nature through my conduct. I do this most readily by

actions which show consideration for others. (cf. 6:20; Mt. 5:16; Rom. 15:6,7) This is so broad a principle that it cannot be restricted to eating and drinking, but includes "whatsoever [I] do."

- e. **IS MY CONDUCT OFFENSIVE TO ANY CLASS OF PEOPLE?** 10:32 (VII. C 7) I must not govern my conduct solely by the group to which I belong. There are those who have different standards. Even if these standards are faulty, I must respect the sensibilities of those who hold them. Paul illustrates this principle by naming the three great classes of people into which his world was divided: Jews, Gentiles and Christians. Our world has many other groups who must be extended sympathetic consideration.
- f. **IS MY CONDUCT LEADING MEN TO CHRIST?** 10:33 (VII. C 8) This was the principle by which the Apostle Paul governed the course of his life (9:1-27). He lived to help others, not to gratify himself. Furthermore, he knew that the greatest help he could give to any man was to lead him to the Saviour. Like Paul, I can glorify God and help my neighbours, as I exalt Christ before them. I cannot become a soul-winner until, like Paul, I am willing to renounce my own rights for the sake of the unsaved.
- g. **IS MY CONDUCT AN IMITATION OF CHRIST'S?** 11:1 (VII. C 9) Let us remember that the Corinthians did not have a written Gospel. They heard the Gospel through Paul. But if this had been their only contact with the Gospel, few would have been impressed. However, they were not only impressed but converted. This was largely because they saw the Gospel exemplified in the life of the Apostle Paul at the same time they heard it from his lips. Now, he calls upon them, and us, to take up the same ministry to others. God expects every believer to apply this same principle to the governing of his own conduct. (cf. Rom. 15:1-3; II Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:4-11; I Pet. 2:21)

- 2. **Two Directives** 10:25-30 (VII. C 10) We will now

go back and note the two situations for which Paul gives definite directives.

- a. **FOOD FOR HOME USE 10:25,26 (VII. C 11)** What a man eats privately in his own home is a personal matter, for it does not affect others. Paul recognizes the individual Christian's right to do as he pleases under these circumstances. He says, "Buy and eat." He does add this word of advice: Since this is purely a matter of filling your stomach, don't investigate the source of your food supply. To do so, would be to enter into matters which do not have to do with food.

In verse twenty-six, Paul gives his reasons for such a directive. He quotes Psalm 24:1, which states that God is the Owner of all things. Paul reasons that no ceremony in an idol temple can remove God's property from His control. God is stronger than all the demons.

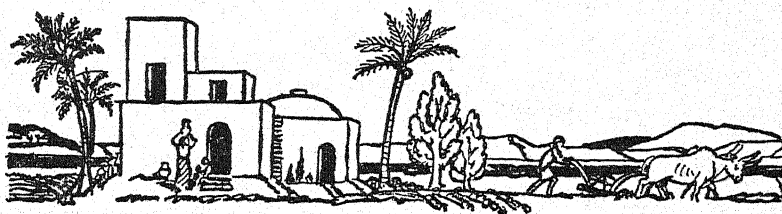
- b. **FOOD SERVED IN THE HOME OF A NON-CHRISTIAN 10:27-30 (VII. C 12)** Now the circumstances under which meat is eaten are changed. We are no longer considering a private occasion but a social function. Paul does not pass judgment on whether a Christian should accept an invitation to a dinner party at a non-Christian home. He permits the individual Christian to make that decision according to the nature of the occasion. But, *if the Christian does accept the invitation*, Paul advises that he make an *unreserved acceptance* by eating that which is set before him.

Paul states one exception to this general rule. If anyone at the social gathering makes an issue of the source of the meat being served, the Christian should abstain from eating it. Why? Because he has learned of its connection with an idol temple? No! Because the informer, by raising the question, indicates that he has a weak conscience. The strong Christian refrains from eating anything that would disturb another's conscience; yet, at the same time, his own conscience remains free. He remains ready to eat anything for which he can give thanks to God.

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON (VII. D. 1)

In the first part of chapter ten, Paul turns our attention to lessons we can learn from the history of the children of Israel. Like us, they too were "living in the overlap." From their failures, Paul emphasises the necessity to avoid idolatry. In showing the harmfulness of idolatry, Paul explains the spiritual meaning of both the Lord's Supper and pagan sacrifices. Then, he gives us some general principles for the regulation of Christian conduct and two practical rules to help us distinguish between private freedom and social duty. Finally, he ends the discussion on meat offered to idols by urging that all believers imitate him, just as he imitated the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this entire discussion, Paul does not diminish our Christian freedom by the slightest fraction. Instead, he insists that our freedom in Christ must be exercised in love, so as to glorify God and help others.



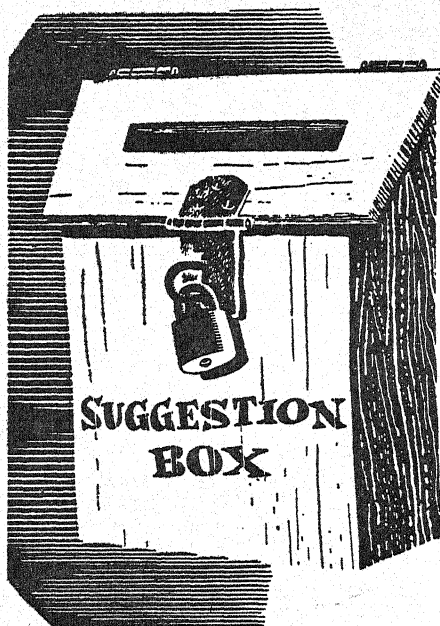
EXERCISES

Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. The first word of chapter ten a) links it with chapter nine; b) begins an entirely new section of thought; c) is not in the original text; d) is the key to the entire chapter. (Intro.)
2. In illustrating the fact that highly favoured and confident people may fail, Paul reminds his readers a) of his own example; b) of Judas Iscariot; c) of the children of Israel; d) of King David. (VII. A 2)
3. How many of those who followed Moses enjoyed spiritual advantages? a) None. b) A small minority. c) Those set apart and anointed for a spiritual ministry. d) All. (VII. A 3)
4. The crossing of the Red Sea was a most important event in the life of every Israelite, because a) it gave him a chance to bathe and wash his dusty clothes. b) it delivered him from his old life and initiated him into a new and different life. c) it gave him a common experience with other Israelites that united them into a nation. d) it made him a member of a maritime nation. (VII. A 5)
5. The *manna* the children of Israel ate in the wilderness was spiritual food in the sense a) that it fell from heaven; b) that it was God-given and had a spiritual meaning; c) that it was a divine miracle; d) that it nourished the people of God and was a daily reminder of His power. (VII. A. 7)
6. The "spiritual Rock" that supplied the needs of the children of Israel in the desert was a) a special kind of porous rock found only in the Sinai peninsula; b) Christ; c) a legend invented by the scribes; d) ordinary limestone. (VII. A 8)
7. Just as the cloud and sea correspond to Christian baptism in the experience of the Israelites, so the *manna* and supernaturally-supplied water correspond to a) the Lord's Supper; b) the Passover; c) church suppers; d) God's daily supply of our needs. (VII. A 8)
8. Israel's history is largely the story of failure. Of those who experienced freedom from slavery in Egypt a) a large minority; b) a handful of people; c) only two;

- d) only the priests; actually pleased God and reached the Promised Land. (VII. A 9)
9. "Ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh." This is a quotation a) from I Corinthians; b) from Galatians; c) from Exodus; d) from Deuteronomy. (VII. A 11)
 10. When the children of Israel committed fornication (i. e. immorality), a) two people; b) 500 people; c) 11,500 people; d) 23,000 people; immediately experienced *physical* death as a punishment. (I Cor. 10:8)
 11. Those individuals who tempted the Lord in the wilderness were destroyed a) by disease; b) by an earthquake; c) by lightning; d) by serpents. (VII. A 12)
 12. In the case of meats being eaten in an idol temple, a) Paul prohibits the Christian from taking part; b) Paul lets the Christian make his own choice; c) Paul tells the Christian to eat, but not to investigate the source of the meat; d) Paul avoids the question, in order to keep peace in the church. (VII. B 1)
 13. The best defence against the sin of idolatry is a) to flee; b) to destroy the idol; c) to denounce idolators; d) to make a thorough study of idolatrous practices. (VII. B 1)
 14. When I partake of "the cup of blessing," I lay claim a) to church membership; b) to salvation from my sins; c) to the fulfilment of my secret desires; d) to the closest-possible, personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. (VII. B 2)
 15. What is the power behind idolatry? a) The power of ignorance. b) The power of an organised priesthood. c) The power of custom. d) The power of demons. (VII. B 3)
 16. When a Christian is invited to dine at the home of an unbeliever, he should a) take his food with him; b) make certain that the food was not offered to an idol; c) secretly put his portion of meat into a plastic bag kept in his pocket; d) eat the food offered to him without asking any questions about it. (VII. C 12)
 17. "Whether therefore ye eat; or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all a) to please your fellow believers; b) to gratify your own desires; c) to the glory of God; d) to relieve the poor." (I Cor. 10:31; VII. C. 6)
 18. When Paul advised the Corinthian Christians, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ," he was calling upon them a) to give up their rights for the sake of others; b) to remain unmarried; c) to become preachers of the Gospel; d) to give him equal honour with Christ. (VII. C 10)

19. What requirement of a soul-winner does Paul mention in I Corinthians 10? a) A seminary education. b) Eloquence. c) Willingness to renounce personal rights. d) Familiarity with the Scriptures. (VII. C 8)
20. Why did Paul say a Christian was free to eat any kind of meat in his own home? a) Because his eating did not affect others with weak consciences. b) Because it was almost impossible to find out which pieces of meat had been sacrificed to idols. c) Because the eating of meat had no spiritual significance. d) Because a Christian home sanctified the food served in it. (VII. C 11)



If you have ideas how this course, or future courses now in preparation, can be made of more value to you, please make use of the SUGGESTION BOX. Send your suggestion with your next examination. Write it on a separate piece of paper, sign your name and explain the problem that led you to make the suggestion.

1. a; 2. c; 3. d; 4. b; 5. b; 6. b; 7. a; 8. c; 9. a; 10. d; 11. d; 12. a; 13. a; 14. d; 15. d; 16. d; 17. c; 18. a; 19. c; 20. a.

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Seven

You may use your Bible and text-book in completing this examination. Quote proof texts wherever you can to give substance to your statements. Ten marks will be given for each question correctly and adequately answered. Post your finished examination by first class mail to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P., India.

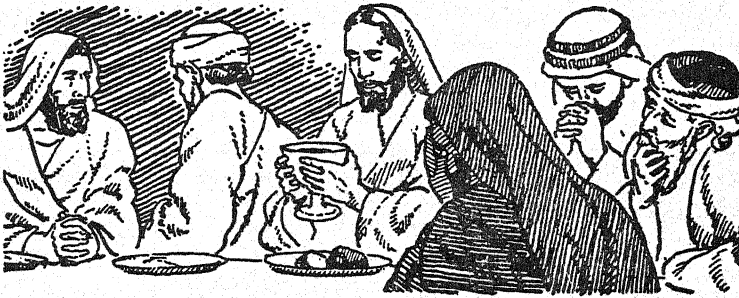
1. List five God-given gifts all Israelites received on their way from Egypt to Canaan.
(1) (2)
(3) (4)
(5)
2. List five sins of the majority of Israelites who had seen God's power and experienced His grace in the wilderness.
(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)
3. a. Why shouldn't a Christian despair when he is tempted?
b. Quote the promise Paul gives in chapter ten, which should guarantee victory in our Christian lives.
c. What should the Christian do to resist the temptations of idolatry?
4. What is the spiritual significance of the Lord's Supper as revealed in chapter ten?
5. a. Why shouldn't a Christian eat food he has been told was offered to an idol?

- b. What is the difference between eating at home and eating at a social function?
6. Do you think idol worship is associated with demon worship in the area in which you live? To what extent? Can you substantiate your judgements by actual experience or reliable testimony?
7. List three practices of some Christians which you would consider "lawful" but not "expedient." State why you judge these practices as you do.
8. What would you say to a friend who gave you the following invitation? "Next Monday is the festival of our caste-deity. We are having a feast at our house and I want you to join us." Why would you answer as you do?
9. Answer your Hindu friend who says: "God is one. All religions are different ways to the same God. We use different names, but they mean the same thing. When I worship an idol, I do not worship the wood or stone of which it is made. I simply use the idol to concentrate my thoughts on God."
10. One of Paul's principles for the regulation of Christian conduct is this: "Do all to the glory of God."
- a. List five things you could *not* do to the glory of God. Tell why in each case.
- b. List the other principles mentioned by the Apostle Paul in chapter ten.



LESSON EIGHT

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND SPIRITUAL WORSHIP



IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FROM CORINTH 7:1-11:34

CELIBACY, MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND SERVICE
LIBERAL LAYMEN AND LIMITED LIBERTY
PAST TRADITION AND PRESENT TEMPTATION
NECESSITY OF MODESTY 11:2-16

1. Divine Principle 11:3-6
 - a. GOD IS THE HEAD OF CHRIST
 - b. CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF MAN
 - c. MAN IS THE HEAD OF WOMAN
2. Scriptural References 11:7-12
3. Instinctive Feelings 11:13
4. Teaching of Nature 11:14,15
5. Church Custom 11:16

NECESSITY OF ORDERLINESS AND REVERENCE

11:17-34

1. Misuse of the Feast 11:17-22
2. Institution of the Feast 11:23-26
3. Insight into the Meaning of the Feast 11:27-34

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 11:2-34

Please read the entire eleventh chapter of I Corinthians. You will remember that verse one really belongs to chapter ten. However, verse one also serves as a transition to introduce the two distinct subjects Paul discusses in chapter eleven. Note these subjects and the way in which each is related to the worship of the Corinthian church. Note also that Paul begins discussion of the first subject by praising the original recipients of the epistle. He begins his discussion of the second subject by saying: "I cannot commend your conduct" (v. 17, Phillips). When we study chapters twelve, thirteen and fourteen, we will discover that Paul discusses yet a third problem relating to public worship.

When you have studied the text of chapter eleven carefully, proceed with the lesson comments below.

SOCIAL CUSTOMS AND SPIRITUAL WORSHIP 11:2-34 (VIII. A 1)

As Paul discusses the proper dress of women attending the public worship service, and the proper observance of the Lord's Supper, we must remember the setting in which the Corinthian Christians lived (cf. Lesson I). At the time Paul wrote to the Corinthians, Corinth was the most licentious city of the civilised world. It was especially infamous for its immorality and drunkenness. Christian converts had been called out of a pagan society with practices that could not be carried over into the Christian church. Paul is anxious to protect the infant church from a perversion of liberty that would compromise with corrupting heathen practices.

In chapter eleven, Paul is dealing with objectionable practices that had crept into the worship service itself. Of many objectionable things, he selects the two most damaging ones. In each case, he takes the reader back to the Scriptural principles that underlie conduct. He insists that the Christian worshipper's conduct must be modest, orderly and reverent.

NECESSITY OF MODESTY 11:2-16 (VIII. B 1) The Holy Scriptures set no restrictions upon woman's abilities or influence. She is man's equal in spiritual privileges and opportunities. She has every right to express herself in worship and in service of the Lord. We need only recall the long line of noble Bible women, and their successors in church his-

tory, to prove the correctness of these statements. (Ask for the elective course entitled: GREAT WOMEN OF THE BIBLE.) Why, then, does Paul seek to prescribe the type of dress women should wear while worshipping?

Do Christian women have a right to attend public worship unveiled? This was the question the Corinthians had asked the Apostle Paul. We must remember that his answer was given in relation to the customs of his day and in relation to the public worship service.

What was the custom in first-century Corinth regarding the appearance of women in public? It was very much the same as in most eastern lands until this present century. All women, except those of ill-repute, appeared in public concealed by a veil. This veil was even more concealing than the sari. The woman was covered from head to feet except for the upper portion of her face. No respectable woman of Paul's day would think of appearing in public without her veil. To do so, would attract attention and lead to misjudgements about her intentions. Yet, some Christian women had been carried away by their new-found Christian freedom to such an extent that they were defying this convention.



After praising the Corinthians for following his teaching and suggestions relating to conduct (v.2), Paul implies that he has still another directive to give them: "But I would have you know . . . " Then he states the principle upon which his judgement concerning proper dress is based. Since the irregularities arose largely from ignorance, Paul instructs the Corinthians regarding God's purposes in creation and nature, the significance of the creation story and the customs of the church universal.

1. Divine Principle 11:3 (VIII. B 2) Paul begins his argument with a principle. This principle is not based on social custom; neither is it based on Christian faith. This prin-

ciple reaches all the way back to God's plan in creation and redemption. It is the divine principle of headships, that is, God's system of authority, leadership and subjection. This system includes three divisions:

- a. GOD IS THE HEAD OF CHRIST. v.3c (VIII. B 3) In becoming the Son of Man to save us from our sin, Jesus voluntarily subjected Himself to the Father. Thus, while here on earth, Jesus could say: "I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent Me" (Jn. 5:30). "I do always those things that please Him" (Jn. 8:29). Even though essentially one in Godhead, there is a distinction in headship between the Father and the Son (Jn. 10:29, 30). This divine headship sets the pattern for other headships.
- b. CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF MAN. v. 3a (VIII. B 4) The Greek language has two different words for "man." Like the Sanskrit word *purusha*, one of these Greek words means a male. Like the Sanskrit word *manusha*, the other Greek word means a human being—an individual (cf. v. 28). It is the former Greek word that is used in verse three. Every male believer is directly responsible to Christ as his Head. For this reason, every male believer was expected to take an active part in the public worship service. (cf. Lesson X. B 1)
- c. MAN IS THE HEAD OF WOMAN. v. 3b (VIII. B 5) As a believer, a woman is under the direct authority of Christ in the same way as a man. But, as a woman, a believer is under the authority of her own husband or father (cf. Num. 30). This is in keeping with the teaching of Ephesians 5:22-24 and I Peter 3:1-6. Please note that Paul is *not* discussing the Headship of Christ over the church, as in Ephesians and



Colossians. Instead, Paul is discussing the distinction between believers who are men and believers who are women.

2. Scriptural References 11:7-12 (VIII. B 6) Paul has taught us about the headships which God established for regulating our relationships with Him and with one another (God; Christ; man; woman). He now goes on to show that these differences cannot be overlooked in public worship. Christians of Paul's day showed these differences by the veiling of women and the unveiling of men. A man should pray and preach with his head uncovered (v. 4). A woman should worship with her head covered (v. 5). Why this difference?

We should note that in this passage the word "head" is used in two different senses: It is used in the literal sense to refer to the head of the physical body—the part that controls all of the body. Also, it is used to refer to the person who has the position of head—the person who exercises leadership or authority over others. Scripture uses the head of the body as a symbol of the Headship of Christ over His body, the church, and over individual male believers. Thus, for a



male believer to cover his head while worshipping would spoil the symbolism and thus dishonour God who established the relationship. In this respect, male believers differ from Jews who cover their heads when they enter a synagogue, thus indicating that Christ is *NOT* their Head. Accordingly, Paul is saying in verse four: "Any (Christian) man praying or forthtelling having his head covered (with a *tal'ith* as a sign of guilt) dishonours his Head" (the Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to Romans 8:1, removed his guilt). A *talith* (or *tal'lith*) is a striped prayer shawl, with a fringe (*zevith*) at each corner, which is worn over the head and shoulders while

praying (cf. Deut. 22:12). This shawl is still worn by orthodox Jews whenever they worship.

Then Paul goes on to show that the case of the woman is just the reverse ("But" v. 5). Just as the man breaks the symbolism of subordination by covering his head, the woman breaks it by uncovering her head. This is because she is the "glory" (v. 7) of man, literally the "outshining" of man. Paul does NOT say that woman is the *image* of man (v. 7). Like man, she is created in the image of God, but *from* man and *for* man (vs. 8, 9). She is a manifestation of man's greatness, even as man is a manifestation of the Creator's greatness. Through her head (i. e. her man), woman reaches the fullest manifestation of herself. In creation, her relationship to God was an indirect one, since she was made from the man who came from the creating hand of God. Paul insists that these basic relationships should be acknowledged in every service of worship. (cf. Gen. 2:7,18-25)

Verse ten is probably the most obscure and difficult portion of this epistle. The Authorised Version says: "For this cause ought the woman to have *power* on her head because of the angels." The Revised Standard Version accepts Kittel's suggestion that an Aramaic word which can mean either *veil* or *authority* has influenced Paul's use of the Greek word. Thus, that version simply translates the verse: "That is why a woman ought to have a *veil* on her head, because of the angels." Literally, the phrase should be translated: "an authority on her head." Thus, J. B. Phillips gives us this understandable paraphrase: "For this reason a woman ought to wear on her head an outward sign of man's authority for all the angels to see." Woman's recognition of her God-given sphere in life is a testimony to angelic hosts as well as to man.

Paul further reasons that if a woman insists on dishonouring her head (i. e. her husband; v. 5) by refusing the sign of his headship, she should also remove the covering given her by nature and have her head shaved. Naturally, she wouldn't think of going that far, since shorn locks were the sign of widowhood, of a woman found guilty of adultery, or of a slave. Then, if custom means so much to her, let her cover her head in the worship service.

Now, in order that no one press his argument to the extreme, Paul balances his statements about the subordination of woman by statements concerning the mutual dependence of men and women (vs. 11,12). Even if woman was dependent upon man for her original creation, man is equally dependent upon woman for his birth. All this is according to the plan and nature of God, Who is the First Cause of all that exists. All this is for man's benefit, even Christ's dependence upon woman for His birth as a man (Gal. 4:4).



3. Instinctive Feelings 11:13 (VIII. B 7) After showing the Biblical authority that underlies his argument, the Apostle Paul appeals to the instinctive feelings of his readers. Does it not seem right and natural to you for a woman to cover her head? Does it not appeal to your common sense that a man ought to keep his head uncovered? Doesn't it strike you as improper for a woman to pray with her head uncovered? Why is this so? Have you ever analysed the reason for these feelings? Look around you, for they are built deep in the very nature of things.

4. Teaching of Nature 11:14,15 (VIII. B 8) God has supplied a natural covering of hair for both men and women. In most societies, men cut their hair short while women allow their hair to grow. Men often become bald, but women rarely lose their hair. Woman has a natural covering that distinguishes her from man. This natural covering is her glory; but, when she enters the worship service, she should hide her own glory with a covering so that no one is distracted from his worship of God. Woman's natural glory should not be taken from her by cutting her hair. Likewise, her veil, of which her hair is the natural symbol, should not be taken from her.

5. **Church Custom 11:16 (VIII: B 9)** Paul has already stated the reasons for the universal church custom that women come veiled to worship. Now, he ends his argument by pointing out that this custom is based on adequate reasons. It is not a matter for debate. Argument will not change the plan God has ordained from the beginning. The Corinthians should remember that they belong to the church universal (4:17; 7:17). Neither the apostles nor any local assembly of Christ's far-flung church had established a custom for unveiled women to attend worship service. Why should the Corinthian church permit such unusual conduct? It may seem fashionable and smart to break with old conventions, but a believer will think twice before he defies standards and shocks the sensibilities of others. Refusal to follow the custom of the church may not be a cause for excommunication, but it is a test of allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ and His call to service. As in all other problems of conscience, the individual Christian's freedom must be governed by concern for the understanding and feelings of others.

NECESSITY OF ORDERLINESS AND REVERENCE 11:17-34 (VIII. C 1) Paul now deals with a second problem connected with the worship of the Christians at Corinth. This has to do with their manner of observing the Lord's Supper.

Paul had been told that the Corinthians were extending their dissensions and divisions to the Lord's table. This was a very serious matter. Paul could find nothing whatever in these circumstances for which he could praise his converts (v. 17). On the contrary, he must rebuke and correct them. Still, he recognised the possibility that the reports might be exaggerated (v. 18b). Even if the situation was as distressing as represented to him, he still believed that God was at work overruling evil for the good of those who believe in Him (v. 19).

Following his usual procedure, Paul sets forth the abiding spiritual principles that underlay the problem confronting his converts. He does this first by pointing out Corinthian abuses of the Holy Communion. Then, he reminds them of the institution of this ordinance which they had heard already from his lips when he ministered to them in Corinth. Finally, he warns them of the necessity to discern the spiritual significance of the feast in which they took part.

1. Misuse of the Feast 11: 20-22 (VIII. C 2) Common meals, celebrating all sorts of occasions, were frequently held in the ancient world. The early church met together for a common meal, called the *ag'a-pe* or Love Feast, in connection with their observance of the Holy Communion. It was a means of promoting Christian fellowship. It prepared the way for the actual rite of the Lord's Supper. Each participant brought some item of food to contribute to this common social meal. The rich brought more than they could eat. The poor brought very little or nothing. In this way, a meal was provided for everyone, even the slaves who were Christians. For some Christian slaves, it was probably the only good meal they had all week.

Because of party strife, this Love Feast had broken up into petty groups that selfishly refused to share their food or to fellowship with each other. Even while they ate at the same place and at the same time, they did not eat together. Some of them ate and drank to excess while others in the same assembly remained hungry (v. 21). Paul agrees that such a feast may be called a supper, but not the *Lord's Supper* (v. 20); for it disregards both the spirit and purpose of the ordinance Jesus instituted. The Lord's Supper is nothing, if it is not a celebration of Christian unity, brought about through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. If a social feast with friends is all that is wanted, Paul suggests that it would be better to hold it in a private home, rather than the home where the Christians gathered for worship (v. 22).

It should be noted that Paul does *not* condemn the common meal. Instead, Paul condemns the manner in which the Corinthians celebrated that meal. Then, he adds a positive note by recounting the institution of the Lord's Supper and indicating its significance for believers.

2. Institution of the Feast 11:23-26 (VIII. C 3) The passage before us is the earliest written account of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Paul penned it to the Corinthians before the disciples who witnessed it had written their Gospels. How did he know the details? He tells us that he received them directly from the Lord (v. 23).

In three short verses, Paul records the origin and significance of the Lord's Supper in such precise terms that almost

all Christians quote his words in their observance of this spiritual feast. Not only are the words beautiful; the teaching is also simple and clear. Every word is worthy of study. Let us conduct our study in question and answer form.

- a. WHO instituted the Lord's Supper? (VIII. C 4)
As with baptism (Mt. 28:19), this ordinance was instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (v. 23). (Note that the Lord's earthly name, "Jesus," is used.) Paul had nothing to do with establishing this ceremony, he merely passed on to his converts the instruction the Lord had given him.
- b. WHEN was it instituted? (VIII. C 5) Jesus instituted this feast on the last night of His ministry—"the night in which He was betrayed" (v. 23). That very day (by Jewish reckoning) He died on the cross. Thus, we recognise the distinctly Christian character of the ordinance.
- c. How did Jesus institute it? (VIII. C 6)
 - (1) He "took bread" (v. 23b). This bread must have been unleavened bread, since Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper at the end of the Pascal Supper that was a part of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lk. 22:1). However, the Greek word does not specify that the bread was unleavened.
 - (2) He gave thanks (v. 24a). Jesus gave thanks to God the Father *for* the bread and later *for* the cup. He did *not* bless the elements themselves. He did *not* transform the bread into His body. We derive the English word *eucharist* from this Greek verb meaning "to give thanks." Some Christians use the word Eucharist for the Lord's Supper. (cf. C. F.: III. C 8)
 - (3) He broke the bread (v. 24b). Even the thin cakes of bread used at the Passover (or Pascal) meal could not be eaten until they were broken.
 - (4) He took the cup (v. 25a). Just as Jesus had taken bread from the table where He and His disciples had eaten the Pascal meal, so He took the cup with its contents of wine (cf. Mt. 26:29;

Mk. 14:25). Wine was the usual drink in all Mediterranean countries. Jesus used "the fruit of the vine" (Lk. 22:18)



d. WHAT did Jesus teach? (VIII. C 7)

- (1) That the bread represented His body (v. 24c). Jesus said concerning the bread: "This is My body." By this He meant that the bread was a symbol of His body which was about to be offered on the cross. The bread represents a spiritual truth—the central truth of the cross—in such a way that our physical senses can comprehend. In other words, the bread is a symbol.

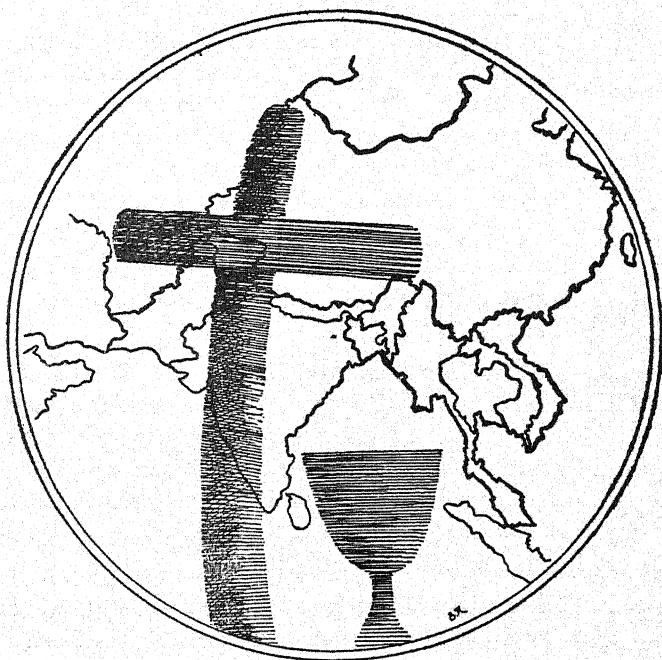
We should be aware that Roman Catholics, Lutherans and many Anglicans hold different views of the meaning of Our Lord's words. We should also remember that Jesus used the same form of speech in presenting other symbolic representations of Himself: "I Am the Vine . . ." (Jn. 15:1); "I Am the Door . . ." (Jn. 10:7); "I Am the Way . . ." (Jn. 14:6); "I Am the Light . . ." (Jn. 9:5); "I Am the Resurrection and the Life . . ." (Jn. 11:25).

- (a) Catholics believe in TRANSUBSTANTIATION—that the bread and wine of the Holy Communion are *transformed* into the very body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ whenever a Catholic priest repeats Jesus' words.
- (b) Lutherans believe in CONSUBSTANTIATION—that the body and blood of Christ are present *with* the bread and the wine.

- (c) Many Anglicans believe in the **REAL PRESENCE** of Christ in the elements of the Holy Communion. They think of His presence as spiritual rather than physical.
- (2) That His body was about to be given as a sacrifice for sin (v. 24d). Jesus said: "My body, which is *for you*." (The better ancient texts omit the word "broken.") Just as the bread of the Lord's Supper is "*for you*," so My body is "*for you*." The bread expresses the significance of Christ's atoning death. His death was substitutionary. He died in the sinner's place. (cf. C. F. : I. D 5).
- (3) That the cup represents His blood (v. 25c). Me-ton'-y-my is a figure of speech in which the name of one thing is used for another which it naturally suggests. By metonymy the cup stands for the wine it contains. But the wine in turn represents the poured-out blood of Jesus. It is Christ's passion that underlies the external signs.
- (4) That His blood is the seal of His new covenant (v. 25c). Every covenant is ratified by a seal. The covenant between Christ and the Christian is ratified by His death at Calvary and His poured-out blood is proof of His death. Christ's death is the seal of a new covenant. The old Jewish covenant of works was confirmed by animal sacrifices at Sinai (Ex. 24:7,8). The new covenant of grace is confirmed by the Lamb of God at Calvary (Heb. 12:24; cf. Mt. 26:28). This covenant is *new* in every way—in time, in nature, in provision. It is *not a contract* between two parties (the Greek word *sun-the'-ke*), *but a covenant* (*dia-the'-ke*) which God alone undertakes to fulfil—a covenant to grant eternal life. This covenant is made with all those who put their faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour. It has nothing to do with our own efforts to be righteous.

e. WHY did Jesus institute the feast? (VIII. C 8)

- (1) As a Memorial. Twice over (vs. 24,25) Jesus says that the eating and drinking is to be "in remembrance of Me." This simple taking of bread and wine is especially in remembrance of the death and, as we shall see, the resurrection of Jesus. Moreover, the remembrance is primarily for the strengthening of the faith of the believer.
- (2) As a Proclamation. The Authorized Version translates verse twenty-six like this: "As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink his cup, ye do *shew* the Lord's death . . ." (v. 26a). Actually,



the thought is that of proclaiming and is used for preaching in many other Bible passages (9:14; Col. 1:28; Acts 4:2; 15:36; 17:3,13). Jesus instituted the Supper so that even the most tongue-tied of His disciples might witness to His vicarious death and resurrection, (the death and resurrection He underwent for others).

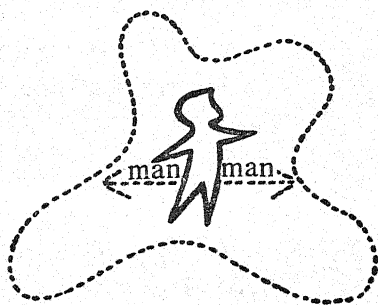
The Lord's Supper is a proclamation to the world that the death and resurrection of Christ are the foundation of the Christian life.

- f. **HOW LONG** are we to keep the feast? (VIII. C 9) Paul's last three words answer this question: "Till He come" (v. 26b). These words set the whole of the Christian's life in an es'cha-to-log'ic-al perspective. (Es-cha-tol'o-gy is the study of last things, especially the final coming and triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ.) The Christian is directed to look forward to the triumphal return of Christ for all those who have put their trust in Him, as well as to look backward to the foundations of his faith. The Lord's Supper is a reminder that the Author of our faith will return in glory to become the Finisher of our faith. The Lord's Supper is a feast of the Lord's absence. We partake of it as pilgrims who are on the march—as lovers who await their Beloved. In the Holy Communion service, we not only witness to Jesus' death, but also to His resurrection. He who died for the church—His Bride—is coming back again for His Bride. The "remembrance" ends in vibrant expectancy: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22: 20).

3. Insight Into the Meaning of the Feast 11:27-34 (VIII. D 1) Paul now turns from the idealism of the institution of the feast to the shortcomings of its observance in Corinth. Since the Lord's Supper has such an important and solemn significance, it is most important that the church celebrate it in a proper way. Improper celebration involves two things: an unworthy manner and unworthy men.

- a. **UNWORTHY MANNER (VIII. D 2)** Paul had told the Corinthians that their observance of the Lord's Supper was harmful rather than helpful (v. 17). They were turning an occasion meant for their blessing into one of judgement (v. 29). Some members of the Corinthian church had died prematurely because of the way they celebrated the Communion. Their manner of participation was not just robbing them of blessing, it called forth divine discipline (v. 32). What was the offence that made such judgement necessary?

In verse eighteen to the end of verse twenty-two. Paul rebukes the Corinthians for their lack of brotherly love and concern for each other. These were horizontal relationships; they involved fellow believers primarily. Now, after explaining the spiritual significance of the Lord's Supper, Paul speaks of our vertical relationship—our relationship with Christ. Any individual who does *not discern* the Lord's body, eats and drinks unworthily (v. 29; cf. Heb. 10:29). What does Paul mean?



Paul has been talking about Christ's body as given for the believer (v. 25). He has just told us that the communion service proclaims Christ's giving of His body (v. 26). He is still talking about the same subject in verse twenty-seven. We act unworthily when we accept the communion as ordinary food, rather than what Christ made it. What did Christ make it? A memorial of His giving of Himself, an accomplished fact that we must take seriously and respond to wholeheartedly. We profane the Lord's Supper when we make it an ordinary time of eating and drinking. We sin when we do not contemplate our Lord's death for us as we partake of the symbols. God judges this sin. His judgment is not for our punishment or our destruction, but for our correction and our improvement. God disciplines every erring child. J. B. Phillips translates verse thirty-two as follows: "He disciplines us as His own sons, that we may not be involved in the general condemnation of the world."



Although we participate in the Lord's Supper as congregations; yet, at the same time, we partici-

pate as individuals. In verse twenty-eight, the Greek word translated "man" means a human being." Each one of us is individually responsible for the way he participates in the collective act.

- b. UNWORTHY MEN (VIII. D 3) Who is worthy to participate at the Lord's table? Every one of us is spiritually unworthy! On the basis of virtue, not one of us can qualify!

Why are we told then to examine ourselves (v.28)? Please note that we are *not* told to examine our virtues. We *are* told to examine our motives for coming to the Lord's table. Our motives for coming must harmonise with the purpose of the Lord's Supper. We must not come to get something for ourselves. We must come for Christ's sake — to proclaim His death. We must not come thoughtlessly or irreverently. We must not come as a means of salvation or as a way to gain personal fitness. Undoubtedly, we will gain through a proper observance of the Lord's Supper, but we must not come to the Table with that motive. Selfishness and sin must be confessed and put aside by way of preparation, so that we will not use the ordinance as a cloak of hypocrisy. Yet, imperfect, needy believers are actually commanded to "do this" — to keep the feast — in remembrance of Jesus and His death, as long as He is absent from us.

A SUMMARY OF THE LESSON (VIII. D 1)

In I Corinthians chapter eleven, the Apostle Paul deals with two problems that had arisen in the worship services at Corinth. The first problem was a lack of modesty. Paul showed that it sprang from ignorance about "headships" in the church: God is the head of Christ. Christ is the Head of man. Man is the head of woman. These headships should be reflected in church practice. The reasons for these headships, and the difference in status between men and women, go back to creation. A believer should think and act intelligently about these relationships.

(Continued on page 151)

EXERCISES

Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

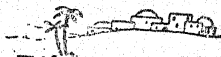
1. In chapter eleven, the Apostle Paul deals primarily with a) problems in the individual Christian's life; b) problems in the home; c) problems caused by the pagan society in which they lived; d) problems connected with Christian worship. (Intro; VIII: A 1)
2. Headship in the family was given by God to a) the wife; b) the children; c) the husband; d) the government. (VIII. B 5)
3. In his argument for modesty, Paul emphasises the wife's place according to a) creation; b) ability; c) social status; d) justice. (VIII. B 1)
4. In I Corinthians 11:4, the Apostle Paul uses the word "head" twice. He is teaching that a man who covers his head while worshipping dishonours a) the church of which he is a member; b) the Lord Jesus Christ; c) himself; d) manhood. (VIII. B 6)
5. The talith is a prayer shawl with fringes at each corner which orthodox Jewish men wear during worship (cf. Deut. 22:12). It is a sign of a) man's guilt before God; b) God's covenant with Israel; c) subjection to the Roman government; d) great humility. (VIII. B 6)
6. From whom did Paul receive his information regarding the institution of the Lord's Supper? a) Peter; b) Barnabas; c) James; d) Christ. (VIII. C 3)
7. The Lord Jesus instituted the Communion ritual a) at the beginning of His public ministry; b) in the middle of His public ministry; c) at the end of His public ministry; d) after rising from the dead. (VIII. C 5)
8. In instituting the Holy Communion, Jesus indicated that eating the bread and drinking the wine was a) a repetition of His sacrifice for sin; b) a memorial of His sacrifice for sin; c) a means of the sinner's salvation; d) a means of breaking down social barriers. (VIII. C 7, 8)
9. Before partaking of the Lord's Supper, a communicant should a) pray and fast for at least half a day; b) bathe

and put on clean clothes; c) examine himself; d) read the Bible and give alms to the poor. (VIII. D 3)

10. To what future event does the Lord's Supper point? a) The Passover. b) Christ's return for believers. c) The Great Judgement. d) Marriage Supper of the Lamb. (VIII. C 9)
11. The Love Feast (agape) was a common meal distinct from, but held in connection with, the Communion service. It was a means of a) promoting the Gospel among unbelievers; b) raising money for the church; c) providing for poor, destitute Christians; d) promoting Christian fellowship. (VIII. C 2)
12. When Jesus gave thanks for the bread and for the cup, a) He transformed them into His body and blood; b) He made them the means of our salvation; c) He thanked God for them and for what they symbolised; d) He multiplied them as He did the loaves and fishes with which He fed the multitude. (VIII. C 6 (2))
13. In instituting the Lord's Supper, Jesus "took the cup." a) This was an empty cup Jesus expected to fill with His tears; b) This was Christ's cup of sufferings which He expects His disciples to share with Him; c) This was a cup of wine by which Jesus symbolised His death; d) This was an ordinary cup of refreshment made memorable to the disciples by Christ's death that same day. (VIII. C 6 (4))
14. When Jesus said: "My body, which is *for you*," He was speaking about a) His utter devotion to the physical welfare of His disciples; b) His exemplary sinless life; c) His substitutionary death; d) His resurrection body. (VIII. C 7 (2))
15. The New Covenant of Grace sealed by Christ's blood grants eternal life to man a) on condition of perfect obedience; b) on the basis of animal sacrifices; c) on the basis of good intentions; d) on the basis of Christ's atoning sacrifice. (VIII. C 7 (4))
16. Jesus instituted the Communion ritual a) as a memorial and proclamation of His death; b) as "a true and proper propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead" (Council of Trent); c) as a substitute for baptism; d) as a sentimental gathering that would unite His disciples. (VIII. C 8)
17. When Jesus said: "This is My body," He meant a) that the bread symbolised His physical body; b) that the bread had actually become His flesh; c) that the bread represented the church, His spiritual body; d) that He would no longer have a physical body. (VIII. C 7)

18. God always deals with those who trifle with spiritual realities. If a believer trifles with the Lord's Supper, God a) punishes him; b) disciplines him; c) excommunicates him; d) disowns him. (I Cor. 11:32; VIII. D 2)
19. We become "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," that is, answerable for the killing of Christ as a criminal; a) when we do not consider the purpose of His death as we partake of the symbols; b) when we accept the bread and wine from an unordained man; c) when we do not take Communion regularly; d) when we come to the Lord's table although we are conscious of faults and imperfections in our lives. (VIII. D 2)
20. When a Christian becomes a hindrance to the Body of Christ, that is to the church, God may a) consign him to hell; b) remove him by physical death; c) revoke his salvation; d) remove his name from the Lamb's Book of Life. (VIII. D 2)

1. d; 2. c; 3. a; 4. c; 5. a; 6. d; 7. c; 8. b; 9. c; 10. b; 11. d; 12. c; 13. c; 14. c; 15. d; 16. a; 17. a; 18. b; 19. a; 20. b.



[Continued from page 148]

The second problem Paul discusses is the Lord's Supper. Abuses had crept into the Corinthian way of commemorating Christ's death. A disorderly common meal, with some eating before others and some remaining hungry, destroyed the whole meaning of the ordinance. Paul reminds them that this ordinance was instituted by the Lord Jesus Himself to proclaim His death. He gives instruction, practical advice and warnings. His solution is that of personal self-examination. In concluding his remarks, Paul promises to come to Corinth to settle the remaining problems.

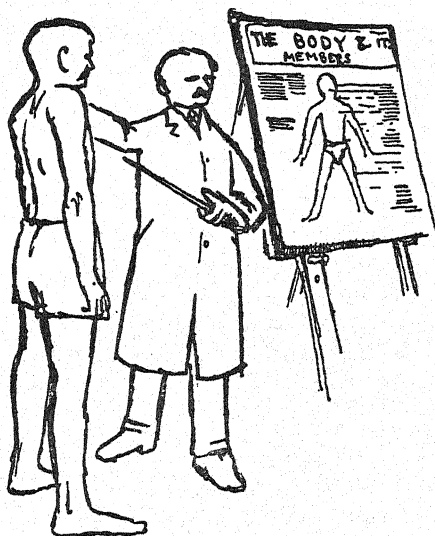
EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Eight

You may use your Bible and text-book in completing this examination. Quote proof texts whenever you can to give substance to your statements. Ten marks will be given for each question correctly and adequately answered. Post your finished examination by first class mail to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P. , India.

1. Explain the significance of a woman covering her head while worshipping.
2. Is there any distinction between male and female in man's spiritual union with Christ? Is there any distinction in the order of nature? In what sense is the husband the head of the wife?
3. Outline Paul's argument against the immodest practice some Corinthian women had adopted in the worship service.
4. Explain the spiritual significance of the Lord's Supper to a Hindu friend who asks: "What is the meaning of this ceremony?"
5. Answer the Roman Catholic who says: "When the priest consecrates the bread and wine, it is changed into the very body and blood of Christ."
6. Describe the sort of self-examination a Christian should make before partaking of the Lord's Supper.
7. According to the teaching of this chapter, what may the discipline of the Lord produce? What may it prevent? How had God disciplined guilty Christians at Corinth?
8.
 - a. Name the events that mark the institution of the Lord's Supper and its final suspension.
 - b. How did divisions in the Corinthian church affect their celebration of the Holy Communion?
9. List each feature of the Lord's Supper in its proper order as established by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.
10. Fill in the following blanks:
 - a. The head of Christ is.....
 - b. A woman praying or prophesying with her head uncovered dishonours her head, that is.....
 - c. "Take, eat; this is"
 - d. When we speak of the Eucharist we are talking about.....
 - e. Metonymy is a figure of speech in which.....

LESSON NINE
SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND GOD-LIKE LOVE



THE CORRECT USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS 12:1-31

ONE SIMPLE TEST 12:2,3

1. Jesus Is Accursed
2. Jesus Is Lord

MANY SPIRITUAL GIFTS 12:4-11

1. Unity of Source vs. 4-7
2. Diversity of Operation vs. 8-10
3. Summary v. 11

ONE CHURCH BODY 12:12-31

1. The Illustration vs. 12-26
2. The Application vs. 27-30
3. The Exhortation v. 31

**THE CONTROLLING POWER OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS
13:1-13**

THE NECESSITY OF LOVE 13:1-3

THE NATURE OF LOVE 13:4-7

THE PERMANENCE OF LOVE 13:8-12

THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE 13:13

**THE COMPARATIVE VALUES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS
14:1-40 (See Lesson X)**

THE SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 12:1-13:13

Please open your Bible and read chapters twelve, thirteen and fourteen of I Corinthians. Many verses of these chapters will be very familiar to some students. Nevertheless, read all three chapters before you begin your study of this lesson.

You will remember that the Apostle Paul already has discussed two problems relating to public worship—proper dress of women at the worship service and proper observance of the Lord's Supper (Lesson VIII). In I Corinthians 12:1-14:40, he discusses a third problem related to public worship—the proper use of spiritual gifts. Of the three, this last problem is the most important, since it involves the inner life of the Christian in contrast to his outward conduct. Thus, Paul continues to discuss church problems, but with a more personal emphasis. This difference will continue to the end of the epistle. Our present lesson will deal only with chapters twelve and thirteen. In chapter twelve, Paul dispels the Corinthians' ignorance concerning the purpose and use of spiritual gifts. In chapter thirteen, he shows that all gifts must be exercised in love. In chapter fourteen, as we shall see in LESSON TEN, he deals with the comparative values of the gifts of prophecy and tongues.

CORRECT USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS 12:1-31 (IX. A 1)

The words of the very first verse are introductory but important. They mention the subject, "spiritual gifts," and also Paul's reason for introducing this subject—the "ignorance" of the Corinthians concerning the use of spiritual gifts. The whole chapter is Paul's effort to dispel their ignorance regarding gifts God had already given.

Christianity is a reasonable system of beliefs and practices. Some of its adherents, like some fanatics at Corinth, may make it appear unreasonable. Actually, it is balanced, sane and practical, since it is based upon Christ, the personification of wisdom. It recommends itself to man's intelligence. Wherever fanaticism or heresy exist, we can be sure it is due to ignorance concerning the true nature of the Gospel. Such dangerous ignorance must be corrected by knowledge. The best way to show that something is counterfeit is to put the true thing alongside of it. This is what Paul does in chapter twelve.

While Christianity is reasonable and intellectual, it is also supernatural. It contains truth that transcends reason. It provides a special endowment that transcends the powers of

man. Paul speaks of this supernatural element of our Faith as "grace-gifts" (cf. IX. A 5; II. A 13) given by God to believers for the benefit of the church.

Through ignorance, a Christian can fall into the fallacy of naturalism. Many "scientifically-minded" Christians of the present day are doing this by their rejection of all that is supernatural. On the other hand, there are Christians who accept a false supernaturalism. This false supernaturalism may be a manifestation of Satanic power, or it may be the result of honest mistakes and extravagances. In either case, doubt is raised in the minds of many concerning the supernatural power of God manifest in and through His church. By understanding the proper use of spiritual gifts, we can maintain the balance of Biblical truth that glorifies God. Paul begins his instruction by giving the believer a simple but sure test for distinguishing the source and inspiration of public demonstrations.

ONE SIMPLE TEST 12:2,3 (IX. A 2) "Spirit possession" was a common phenomenon in the idol-worshipping religions from which many Corinthian Christians had been saved (v. 2; cf. I Thes. 1:9). The idols themselves were dumb, but demons (10:20) spoke through the priests and priestesses who served the idols. How could the ordinary believer distinguish between the soothsayers of their old associations and the inspired leaders of Christianity? When the outward appearance of all possessed individuals is so very similar, how can the believer distinguish between those possessed by the Holy Spirit and those possessed by evil spirits?

As usual, Paul's answer is fundamental. He does not deal with the *outward form* of Christianity. He calls attention to the all-important content, which is Christ. What a person believes about the Lord Jesus Christ determines whether he is a Christian or non-Christian. Basically, there are only two beliefs anyone can hold concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. These are opposing beliefs. To hold the one, is to renounce the other. What are these beliefs? Either a person believes that "Jesus is accursed," or that "Jesus is Lord."

1. Jesus Is Accursed (IX. A 3) Some people at Corinth were blaspheming by saying: "A-nath'e-ma Jesus." This word *anathema* is used in the SEPTUAGINT—the Greek translation of

the Old Testament — for the Hebrew word *ban*, which refers to anything consigned to the destroying wrath of God (Lev. 27: 28; Josh. 6:17). In the New Testament *anathema* means “accursed” (I Cor. 16:22). Origen, who wrote two centuries after the time of Paul, tells us that the Gnos’tic sect of Or’phites used this blasphemy as part of their initiation rites. Indeed, Paul, before his conversion, spent much of his time and effort in trying to make Christians utter this blasphemous statement (Acts 26:11). It was a phrase frequently used by Jews who thought they had Scriptural grounds for pronouncing this curse on our Lord (cf. Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13).

Out of a wealth of personal experience, the Apostle Paul declares that no one speaking under the Holy Spirit can ever utter such a statement. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, a believer speaks words with the very opposite meaning.

2. Jesus Is Lord (IX. A 4) The work of the Holy Spirit is to set forth Jesus as Lord (Jn. 15:26; 16:13,15). The Spirit constantly seeks to glorify Him (Jn. 16:14). He convicts sinners of their sin and enables them to grasp the truth that Jesus is their Saviour (Jn. 16:8,9). He also enables the believer to live in the reality of Christ’s victory (Gal. 5:16; Eph. 5: 9). It is the presence of the Holy Spirit in a person’s life that makes him a Christian (6:19; Rom. 8:9). It is the Holy Spirit in a Christian’s life that makes the difference in his character and destiny (Rom. 8:11). It is because the believer has received the Holy Spirit into his life that he can give witness to the Lordship of Jesus. All God’s many spiritual gifts come to the believer because he has received the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. C. F. LESSON TWO).

In I John 4:2-4, the Apostle John gives an identical test, based on the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer’s life. The only difference is that John is emphasising the humanity of Jesus, while Paul is thinking about the deity of Jesus. Both make confession of Jesus the sole test whether a person is speaking by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, or not. (cf. Phil. 2:11 and Rom. 10:9, which should read: “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus, as Lord, . . .”) A person’s attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ is the true test of his spiritual state. The attitude of a Christian will be that of loyalty. However humble or commonplace his natural gifts,

the true Christian will confess: "Jesus is Lord; Jesus is MY Lord."

MANY SPIRITUAL GIFTS 12:4-11 (IX. A 5) When a Roman conqueror returned from his military campaign to his headquarters at Rome, he entered the city in triumph. Everyone came to see him and his troops as they marched down the main street of the city. He in turn displayed his captives and the valuable items he had seized. He also distributed gifts in abundance as he moved through the crowds of people who had supported his cause.

On the occasion of His triumph over sin and death, our Lord Jesus Christ did the very same thing. In speaking of spiritual gifts in the fourth chapter of Ephesians, Paul updates a quotation from Psalm 68:18, "When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men" (Eph. 4:8). This is a reference to Pentecost, when our ascended Lord gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to His waiting disciples. Through the Holy Spirit, Christ also bestowed the rich and varied spiritual gifts that enables His church to fulfil His commands.

Paul is giving instruction about these *spiritual gifts* (cf. 1:7). The Greek word he uses is *cha-ris'ma-ta*; its singular form is *cha-ris'ma*. The Greek word *char'is* means grace. Thus, *charisma* denotes a grace-gift, a special gift, a personal talent entrusted to the individual believer for the enrichment of the whole body of Christ. These gifts differ from individual to individual (cf. 7:7), but they all have one Source.

1. Unity of Source vs. 4-7 (IX. A 6) Although Paul is about to speak of nine distinct spiritual gifts, his basic thought that underlies the whole chapter is the unity of the church. This is a functional unity that benefits every member. It is not uniformity. The Holy Spirit gives different spiritual gifts to different believers because they have different functions to perform in the church.

Let us tabulate this oneness in variety that the Apostle Paul is talking about:

Various gifts, *but* One Spirit (v.4)

Various kinds of service, *but* One Lord (v.5)

Various assignments of work, *but* One God (v.6)

The Apostle is speaking about three different things: gifts, spheres of service and the assignment of tasks. All three

are given every believer (v. 7). Each is a "ministration" or distribution of the Spirit, which the believer may use or neglect. Read the PARABLE OF THE POUNDS as recorded in Luke 19:11-28 (cf. Mt. 25:14-30; Mk. 13:34-37).

In tracing the Source of believers' gifts, spheres and assignments, Paul speaks of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, as if they were *one* and *equal* (cf. Rom. 8:9-11; II Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6). By associating a different aspect of the same function with each person of the Trinity, Paul sets forth the fundamental truth of the *trinity* (the three-in-oneness) of the Godhead.

Thus, there are many different talents displayed in the church, but they all come from one Source. There are many gifts, but they all come from one Giver. There are many different types of service rendered by Christians, but each service is inspired and empowered by the same Spirit.

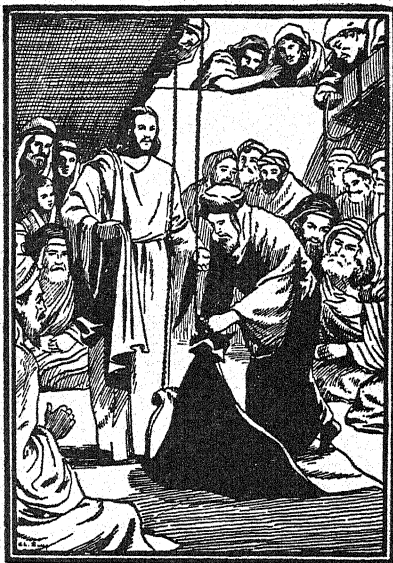
2. Diversity of Operations vs. 8-10 (IX. A 7) Now let us note the nine gifts Paul traces to the one Spirit, Who is God the Holy Spirit.

- a. THE WORD OF WISDOM v. 8a (IX. A 8) Wisdom means "insight" into the nature of things. It discerns the actual situation and acts according to the circumstances. It is a gift that belongs to the sphere of teaching.
- b. THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE v. 8b (IX. A 9) Although the gift of knowledge is very similar to that of wisdom, there is a difference. Knowledge is the God-given ability to express divinely revealed truth in understandable words (cf. 2:6,7,13). It is intellectual apprehension of facts, while wisdom is a practical evaluation of these same facts. Knowledge is a gift of pure understanding; wisdom, of applied understanding.
- c. FAITH v. 9a (IX. A 10) Paul is *not* talking about faith for personal salvation. This is *not* justifying faith, but a special confidence in God that makes His promises effective. It is ability to live in complete dependence upon God to supply all your needs, and especially to supply the needs of the church, through you. (cf. 13:2b)

d. GIFTS OF HEALING

v. 9b (IX. A 11)

We should note that this gift is spoken of in the plural. There are different kinds of healing ministries. Undoubtedly, the ability to heal miraculously, as Jesus (Mk. 2:3-12) and Paul (Acts 14:9, 10) and Peter (Acts 9:34) healed, is included here. However, there are many



cases of healing that are not miraculous. Although these cases of healing are not startling, they are true cases of divine healing—healing by God in response to the ministry of a believer with the gift of healing. Such healings may utilise natural law rather than set it aside.

e. WORKING OF MIRACLES v. 10a (IX. A 12)

A miracle is a manifestation of the power and presence of God. It is startling because it temporarily sets aside the natural laws with which we are familiar. It is a meteor flash of supernatural power against the darkness of the usual and the commonplace. It accomplishes things beyond human capabilities, as in Paul's dealings with El'y-mas (Acts 13:11) and with Eu'tychus (Acts 20:10). cf. Rom. 15:18,19

f. PROPHECY v. 10b (IX. A 13)

The gift of prophecy enables a person to receive and proclaim direct revelations from God. It enables the prophet to understand the mind of God to the extent that he can become the messenger of God. LESSON TEN deals with the importance of this gift. (cf. Acts 2:17, 18; 11:28; 15:32; 19:6; 21:9-11)

- g. **DISCERNING OF SPIRITS v. 10 c (IX. A 14)** We have already noted the test (vs. 1-3) any believer may use to distinguish good and evil spirits. We are now concerned with a special gift bestowed on only a few individuals. By it they are able to distinguish true messages of the Holy Spirit from false and imagined ones. These gifted Christians are the divinely appointed intelligence officers of the church. They help believers note the difference between human and divine inspiration. (cf. 14:29).
- h. **TONGUES v. 10d (IX. A 15)** The Corinthians wanted to possess the gift of tongues more than any other gift, because the one exercising the gift was elevated into such an ecstasy that he spoke a language unknown to himself or those around him. Paul does not question the reality of this gift, but as we shall see in our next lesson, he does warn against dangers that accompany its use. True ecstasy, hysteria and self-hypnotism are difficult for some people to distinguish.
- i. **INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES v. 10e (IX. A 16)** The gift of interpreting tongues was the ability to understand and translate the message given by an ecstatic Christian speaking in an unknown tongue. It was ability to speak a language the interpreter had never learned. God designed this gift to serve as a balance wheel to the gift of tongues, just as the discerning of spirits was a regulator of the gift of prophecy.

3. Summary v. 11 (IX. A 17) Verse eleven emphasises both the fact that there are many gifts and that "all" (this word is emphatic) of them are given by the Spirit of God. This "selfsame Spirit" distributes to "every" Christian, but the gifts differ in each case according to the discriminating will of the Holy Spirit, not the desire of the believer. Paul gives further instruction on spiritual gifts in Romans 12:4-10 and in Ephesians 4:1-12 as well as the balance of this chapter and the two that follow.

ONE CHURCH BODY 12:12-31 (IX. A 18) Let us not forget that Paul is dealing with a specific problem in the

Corinthian church, namely, the exaltation of some spiritual gifts over others. Having emphasised the different kinds of gifts and the singleness of their Source, Paul now seeks to correct the false thinking of the Corinthians. To do this, he uses a familiar illustration which he then applies to the church.

1. The Illustration vs. 12-26 (IX. A 19) In Greek literature, society was pictured as a human body with different classes of people performing different functions or services. The Indian story about the origin of castes probably was invented to set forth much the same idea. Paul uses this familiar figure of speech as a picture of the church. Let us note what he is teaching.

- a. "THE BODY IS NOT ONE MEMBER, BUT MANY." v. 14 (IX. A 20) Think for a moment about the members of your body. You are most aware of your external members—your hands, feet, ears, eyes, nose, mouth. But your hidden members are even more important. Each one is different in structure; each one has its own specialised function.

This is one side of the truth Paul is illustrating. Let us note the other side as well.

- b. "THEY ARE MANY MEMBERS, YET BUT ONE BODY." v. 20 (IX. A 21) All the members of your body make up one living organism—one complete body.

To help the Corinthians appreciate the unity of the body, Paul imagines a conversation between the different parts of the body: "I am different from you, so I can't possibly belong to the body," the foot says to the hand (see v. 15). The statement is true, but the conclusion drawn from it is nonsense. The foot and the hand are different. They are different because they were made to perform different functions. The feet were made to carry the body from place to place. The hands were made to grasp and hold things. An acrobat may be able to walk on his hands, but normally he prefers to walk on his feet. Occasionally, you may pick up an object from the ground with your toes, but it is easier to do it with your fingers, even if you must stoop to reach it.

Now, Paul imagines a conversation between members that are even less alike: "I am not like you; I cannot hear a single word," the eye says to the ear, "so it is obvious that I am not a part of the body." What a silly conclusion! Can you imagine a body that is "one enormous eye" (paraphrase by F. F. Bruce)? Or can you imagine a body that is just one big ear? How would such a body see or smell? It couldn't! It would be defective. It would not be a complete body. A human body requires many organs functioning in different ways.



Without realising it you witness to the unity of the body when you say: "I have a stomach ache." You would not think of saying: "My stomach has an ache." That ache in one member of your body distresses the whole body and makes you conscious of the unity of the various parts.



- c. **THEY ARE DIFFERENT, BUT EACH IS ESSENTIAL (IX. A 22)** If we try to assign places of relative importance to the members of the body, we are like the man who tries to decide which is the most important leg of a three-legged stool. All are essential. Each has its special function. The body needs each member. The whole body experiences pain, or even death, through the malfunctioning of a single member. For this reason, each member must "care for" the others, so that there is "no schism (division) in the body" (v. 25). The loss of any member mutilates the body.

2. The Application vs. 27-30 (IX. A 23) These observations about the body are only illustrations of the truths Paul wishes to apply to the Corinthians. "You members of the

church at Corinth," Paul says, "are a body of Christ" (see v. 27). This is a tremendous statement. What does Paul mean by it?

- a. CONCERNING THE MEMBERS v. 27 (IX. A 24) In other Scripture passages (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19) the relationship between the believer and Christ is represented as that between a body and its head. Here Paul literally says: "Ye are [the] *body* of Christ." Stress falls on the word "body." He is emphasising the quality of the relationship that applies to the whole assembly. Then he adds: "and severally members thereof." Paul is saying that each individual Christian is a member of that body (cf. 6:15)—the mystical body of Christ—the church. This is the distinctive glory of the Christian.

It is easy to accept this truth intellectually, but Christians must accept its implications for their day-to-day living also. Christians must recognise their need of each other. As members of the same body, Christians must respect each other and sympathise with each other. Above all, they must respond to the will of Christ, the Head of the body. And what is Christ's will? To heal the sick. To comfort the sorrowing. To instruct the ignorant. To save the lost. While living on this earth, Jesus made His concerns evident to all by the service He rendered. Now, Jesus is no longer here on earth, but His mystical body, the church, is still in this world. During this present age, Christ expects His church to fulfil His will concerning mankind.

*"He has no hands but our hands
To do His work today;
He has no feet but our feet
To lead men in His way;
He has no voice but our voice
To tell men how He died;
He has no help but our help
To lead them to His side.*

- b. CONCERNING THE MINISTRY vs. 28-30 (IX. A 25)
After applying the principles of his illustration to

members of the church at Corinth, Paul lists the various gifts given by the Spirit of God which enable Christ's mystic body, the church, to fulfil His will. Just as different members of the body have different functions, so different Christians have different tasks to perform for God. Paul lists eight special gifts that enable individual Christians to fulfil their special assignments. This list differs slightly from that given in verses eight, nine and ten (cf. Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:11). Here Paul lists the gifts or forms of service, according to their importance.

First on the list are the "apostles," men who saw Christ after He arose from the dead, and were commissioned by Him to found the church.

In second place, Paul lists "prophets" who declared the mind of God on definite issues at specific times (cf. 14:3; II Peter 1:20,21).

Thirdly, Paul lists "teachers" who took over the place of the prophets after the canon of Scripture was completed.

After that, Paul moves from the personal to the general by first listing "miracles" (literally *du'nam-is*; cf. II. B 6). Then he mentions "gifts of healings" (cf. IX. A 11), "helps"—assistance of any kind, "governments"—day-to-day oversight or administration, and finally "diversities of tongues"—ecstatic speech addressed to God and not to man (cf. 14:2,28).

To emphasise that these gifts or offices are not possessed by every believer, Paul asks seven questions that demand "No" for an answer (vs. 29, 30). We list them below as paraphrased by Kenneth N. Taylor:

"Is everyone an apostle?"

"Is everyone a preacher?"

"Are all teachers?"

"Does everyone have the power of doing miracles?"

"Can everyone heal the sick?"

"Does God give all of us the power to speak in languages we've never learned?"

"Can just anyone understand what those are saying who have that gift of foreign speech?"

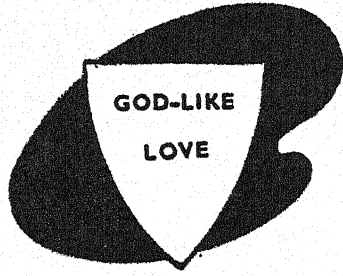
Do you remember that Paul mentioned *eight* gifts before asking this series of questions? Why is it that he asks only *seven* questions? Has Paul forgotten one of the gifts, or has he purposely omitted one? Please note that Paul does *not* ask: "Can everyone be a helper? Can everyone shoulder some of the routine day-to-day work (governments) of the church?" Of course Paul did not ask those two questions, because their answer is "Yes." Even the least gifted among the believers can serve, no, must serve, as a helper in the local church. (Paul omits asking about two gifts listed in verse twenty-eight, and asks two questions about the last-named gift.)

3. **The Exhortation v. 31 (IX. A 26)** The Apostle Paul draws this part of his instruction to a close by urging his readers to "covet" (i. e. desire) earnestly the best (lit., the greater) gifts." Those gifts are greater, as Paul will show in chapter fourteen, which are most useful in building the church. But what is the point of the exhortation when those gifts are given according to the will of God and not according to the desire of man? Certainly God wants believers to display spiritual ambition. By faithful use of the gifts God has already given us, we can qualify to receive greater gifts. (cf. Mt. 25:28) Even so, there is something more important. Paul calls it "a more excellent way" and uses the next thirteen verses to tell us about it.

THE CONTROLLING POWER OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS 13:1-13 (IX. B 1)

The great German writer, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, uttered one of his most perceptive statements when he said: "Against the superiority of another, there is no remedy but love." Long before the time of Von Goethe, the Apostle Paul offered this same remedy to believers who envied those with gifts they lacked, and despised those who lacked the gifts they

had. Here in I Corinthians 13, Paul shows that the grace of love is indispensable to the proper use of any gift. But Paul is not talking about just any kind of love. He does not use the Greek word *stor'ge*, meaning parental affection. He does not use the Greek word *e'ros*, meaning sexual love. He does not use the Greek word *phil'i-a*, meaning brotherly love. Instead, he uses the word *ag'a-pe*, meaning God-like love. This is the crowning grace which every Christian must display regardless of how many or how few his gifts.

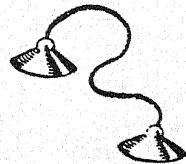


When the New Testament was translated from Greek into Latin, this word *agape* was translated by the Latin word *caritas*. Then, when the Latin New Testament was translated into English, King James' scholars correctly translated the word *caritas* as "charity." But as Paul shows through his description of "charity," it is a far nobler virtue than kindness to the poor and needy. Paul is describing God-like love.

There are four distinct parts or stanzas in Paul's song about love. In them Paul speaks about the necessity, nature, permanence and supremacy of love.

THE NECESSITY OF LOVE 13:1-3 (IX. B 2) To show that love is absolutely necessary if our lives and service are to be of any lasting worth, Paul describes the result of using various gifts without the motivation of love. He would have each Christian know that he can serve God acceptably even if he is not gifted, but he cannot serve acceptably if he does not love.

1. More Important than Tongues v. 1 (IX. B 3) As we shall see in our next lesson, the ability to speak in tongues was the gift which most Corinthian Christians coveted. If this gift is exercised without love, Paul declares that it has no more spiritual value than the noisy "sounding brass" of a temple gong, or the "tinkling cymbal" used in heathen rituals. Even if the believer were able to speak every angelic as well as every human language, his utterances would still be without spiritual meaning.

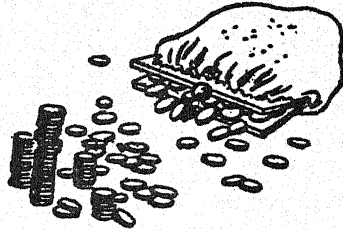


2. More Important than Prophecy v. 2a (IX. B4) In the next chapter, Paul points out that prophecy is a greater gift than tongues. Nevertheless, it loses its Christian character if it is not prompted by love. Even knowledge of future events and the mysteries of divine revelation is no substitute for the humble grace of love. (cf. II. B 9; IX. A 9)



3. More Important than Miracle-Working Faith v. 2b (IX. B 5) Jesus describes this kind of faith in Matthew 17:20. Yet, without love, this mountain-moving faith is of no spiritual value.

4. More Important than Charity v. 3a (IX. B 6) Our Lord Jesus Christ gave witness to the superiority of love over charity (cf. IX. B 1) when he commended Mary for her act of love in anointing Him for His burial, while rebuking Judas for his loveless interest in giving to the poor (Jn. 12:3-8).



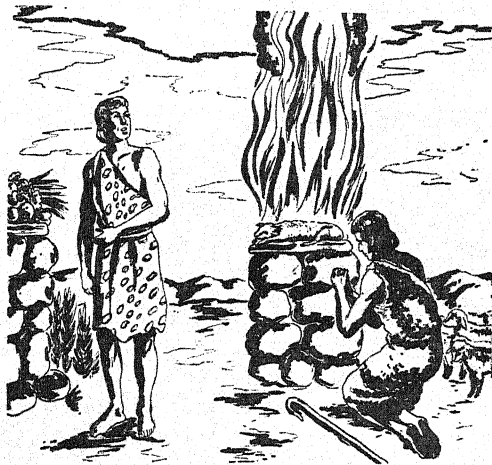
5. More Important than the Supreme Sacrifice v. 3b (IX. B 7) This is the final and most striking phrase in Paul's series of statements. Unless a martyr is motivated by love, rather than fanaticism, stubbornness or pride, his sacrifice of life itself will be a fruitless service for Christ.

THE NATURE OF LOVE 13:4-7 (IX. B 8) In language that almost exhausts itself, Paul has declared that love gives every other gift its value. Now, in order that the Corinthians examine themselves, Paul lists the characteristics of love. Although his list is not exhaustive, he includes fifteen marks of love a believer should show forth in his life. He begins with two closely related characteristics. Then he mentions eight things the Corinthians do, which are *not* characteristic of love. Finally, he concludes the series with five more positive characteristics.

1. Love Is Patient. v. 4a (IX. B 9) Patience is love's response to wrongs and injuries. Scripture tells us that patience is one of the attributes of God (Rom. 9:22; 15:5). Jesus taught patience (Mt. 18:21,22) and exemplified it throughout His life. (cf. I Tim. 1:16)

2. Love Is Kind. v. 4b (IX. B 10) Kindness is the reverse side of the coin of patience. It is the active aspect of patience. It raises suffering above the level of endurance to that of service—service to those who abuse us. This characteristic is also an attribute of God, taught or implied on every page of the Bible (Ps. 117:2; Lk. 6:35; Rom. 2:4; Eph. 2:7; 4:32; Titus 3:4; I Peter 22:30) and exemplified by Christ in His patient ministry to the penitent thief (Lk. 23:39-43). (cf. Lk. 6:35; Eph. 4:32)

3. Love Does Not Envy. v. 4c (IX. B 11) Envy is jealousy, or sadness because of the success of someone else. It even seeks to deprive others of what they have. This was the cause of the cliques that divided the church at Corinth. They were jealous of one another's gifts; they envied the pre-eminence of some church leaders.



Paul knew that this base passion—the very opposite of love—had led Cain to murder his brother Abel (Gen. 4:3-8; I Jn. 3:12; Jude 1:11) and would lead the Corinthians out of the will of God. The cure he recommends for the troubles at Corinth is love that “envieth not.”

4. Love Does Not Boast. v. 4d (IX. B 12) The Greek word translated “vaunteth” is seldom used. It refers to our outward behaviour—to making a show of our imagined superiority. Such boasting will naturally lead to friction and strife as it had already done at Corinth.

5. Love Is Not Proud. v. 4e (IX. B 13) Pride is the inward disposition that prompts men to boast. It is because men are “puffed up” that they vaunt themselves. Since this was the foremost failing of the Corinthians, Paul has already used the word “puffed up” five times (4:6, 18, 19; 5:2; 8:1). Now he uses it a final time in pointing out the remedy.

6. Love Does Not Act Unbecomingly. v. 5a (IX. B 14) In the sight of God, the behaviour that is right is the behaviour that is becoming, seemly, proper. Rude, overbearing or shocking behaviour is often caused by an inner life that is out of balance. We practise one virtue at the expense of other virtues. For example, we are so frank in expressing our opinions that we become unsympathetic. It is love that can co-ordinate all the forces of our lives so that we seek the best in the best way. In the next section of his epistle (chap. 14, esp. v. 40), Paul insists that all things must be done "decently" and in an orderly way. God's ways are always right (Hos. 14:9); our ways should be the same (Deut. 6:18).

7. Love Is Not Selfish. v. 5b (IX. B 15) Love does not demand its own rights, but lays them aside for the comfort and benefit of others. This is the quality of the love of God (Jn. 3:16) that Jesus especially displayed while here on earth — a love that never sought its own benefit, but literally sacrificed itself for others. Even Christ's enemies witnessed to His unselfish love when they said: "He saved others, Himself He cannot save" (Mt. 27:42). They were essentially correct. His unselfish love kept Him there on the cross. This is the quality of love He demands of His disciples (Jn. 13:15; 15:12; cf. Mt. 22:39; I Cor. 10:24). It is the very opposite of self-seeking that drags a fellow-believer into the law courts (I Cor. 6).

8. Love Is Not Irritated by Wrongs. v. 5c (IX. B 16) Love is good-natured; it takes no notice of the small annoyances and personal injustices of life. It keeps a man's disposition sweet and his temper unruffled. When Jesus' enemies scourged and mocked and crucified Him, He answered not a word (I Pet. 2:23). Our anger at personal wrongs is generally an indication of our selfishness.

9. Love Does Not Keep an Account of Wrongs. v. 5d (IX. B 17) God-like love does not harbour resentment or seek revenge. It is able both to forgive and to forget. It disciplines memory so that worthy things are retained while unworthy things fade away. (cf. Zech. 8:17) It is said of Abraham Lincoln that he never forgot a kindness nor remembered a wrong. Whether this was true of Lincoln or not, it should be true of every Christian, for God has set us an example in removing our sins "as far as the east is from the west" (Ps. 103:12).

10. Love Does Not Enjoy the Wrong-Doing of Others. v. 6a (IX. B 18) Dr. Robert Moffatt translates this phrase: "Love is never glad when others go wrong." The very fact that news of scandal travels faster and further than good news, is proof of our lack, as well as the Corinthians' lack (5:2), of the kind of love Paul is speaking about. Jesus displayed this kind of love in dealing with the woman taken in adultery (Jn.8:3-11). Paul expects the Corinthians to do the same in connection with wrong-doing at Corinth (6:8).



11. Love Delights In Truth. v. 6b (IX. B 19) Truth is the opposite of "unrighteousness" or wrong-doing. Delighting in truth is loyalty that is always on God's side regardless of the individuals who may be involved. This love that delights in truth lifts the believer who possesses it above personalities, parties and partisanship. Since it has nothing to conceal, it not only faces up to truth, but actually finds pleasure in every aspect of truth. Obviously, it includes truthfulness in speaking; it also includes truthfulness in thinking, in the realm of our feelings and in the realm of our wills.

12. Love Tolerates Everything. v. 7 a (IX. B 20) King Solomon expressed the same thought poetically when he wrote (S. S. 8:7a):

*Many waters cannot quench love,
Neither can the floods drown it.*

God-like love bears all the unpleasant things that life may

have in store—folly, sin, neglect, pain. It accepts people and situations as they are, without protest. It submits to the heavy burdens of misunderstanding, scorn and hatred. Yet, this bowing under the burdens of life is not mere lack of action. Love stoops to conquer. (Read the entire Book of Hosea.)

13. Love Is Completely Trusting. v. 7b (IX. B 21) Paul does not mean that love is easily deceived, but that it assigns the best possible motives to a person's actions. This is the way to retain your faith in people and to implant your own faith in them. This is the way God treats the sinner. God places confidence in one who is unworthy of His confidence: He forgives his sin; He adopts him as His child; He bestows His love upon him; He treats him as if he were already seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. He treats the sinner according to His Own faith in him. With what result? With the result that the sinner actually becomes what God has believed him to be. Now that God has set us an example, He expects us to place trusting love in Him, and also in our fellow-men.

14. Love Never Stops Hoping. v. 7c (IX. B 22) When the sad realities of life leave no more room for faith, love clothes the object of her affection in the resplendent robes of her own expectations. Love is not slow to acknowledge: "It is not." However, love hastens to add: "It shall be." God-like love always has a wider outlook than our present horizons.

15. Love Is Unwavering in Resolution. v. 7d (IX. B 23) The final characteristic of love that Paul mentions is constancy—constancy under the trial of deferred hope. When faith is gone, love continues to hope; when hope is gone, love still refuses to give in. Even in the blackest night, love faces the coming sunrise. It holds on to the promise of its Lord: "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved" (Mt. 10:22). Such love is the gift of the God of love. The believer is never more like His God than when he shows forth the characteristics of the love of God.

THE PERMANENCE OF LOVE 13:8-12 (IX. B 24)
The Apostle Paul envisions the gifts of God as a company of soldiers marching down the avenues of time. They march through day and night, heat and cold, summer and winter. As time stretches on and eventually lengthens into eternity,

soldier after soldier falls by the wayside. Finally, there is but one soldier remaining at his post. The name of this soldier is Love. "Love never faileth," or more literally, "Love never falls to the ground" (v. 8 a).

What are the names of the soldiers who fall by the wayside? Paul names only three of them: prophecy, tongues and knowledge. When the full revelation of God is known, prophecy becomes unnecessary. When the Bride of Christ has been ushered into the presence of her Lord, tongues will no longer be heard. When He Who is the personification of wisdom dwells in our midst, knowledge by special illumination will be a thing of the past. But love will be as necessary as ever. It will continue after all other gifts have passed away. It is immortal, because we have eternal need of it.

Then, Paul uses two illustrations to emphasise the incompleteness of all God-given gifts but love:

1. All gifts but love are like a child's knowledge that gives way to mature understanding (v. 11; cf. Eph 4:13).

2. All gifts but love are like dim reflections in a mirror, which no one bothers with when he can look upon the object itself (v. 12; cf. I Jn. 3:2.)

THE SUPREMACY OF LOVE 13:13 (IX. B 2)

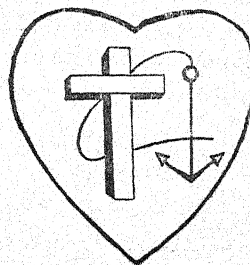
Paul has already transported us from earth to heaven, but he is still talking about the greatest

thing in the world—love. He has eliminated the things that belong only to time. He now considers only those relationships that belong to eternity. Listen as he names them: "Faith, hope, love, these three." Then he goes on to make an astounding statement: "The greatest of these is love."

Is Paul correct in placing love above all other gifts and graces that



METAL MIRROR MADE AT CORINTH

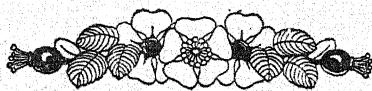


will continue throughout eternity? Is he right in saying that throughout all time and eternity God has nothing greater or better for us than love? Your present author thinks that he is correct, since love is of the very nature of God Himself. We cannot say that God is faith; we cannot say that God is hope; but we can say that God is love. Love is supreme, because God is love and God is supreme.

In his letter to the Christians at Rome, the Apostle Paul states the same truth in the form of a personal conviction: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor principalities nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is *in* Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Rom. 8:38,39). Is this same love in you?

THE SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 12:1-13:13 (IX. C 1)

Paul teaches that the church is a unit in diversity. He mentions nine distinct gifts, but he traces them all to one Source. He compares the relationship of individual Christians having different gifts to that of the several organs of the body with different functions. Just as God has created different members in the physical body of man, so he has placed different members in the spiritual body of Christ—the church. Some of these members are more prominent than others, because God has seen fit to endow them with more prominent gifts. However, the smooth functioning of the body of Christ does not depend so much on gifts as on God-like love. Paul takes thirteen verses to set forth the supreme importance of love. He shows its incomparable worth. He shows that love will last when all the gifts which the Corinthians especially desired will no longer be needed. Love has an unrivaled place in the purposes of God for all time and eternity. Yet, love is not a gift God gives to some and withholds from others. Rather, love is a quest we all should pursue. Every believer may show forth the love of God, if he chooses to follow the "more excellent way."



EXERCISES

Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. It is the special work of the Holy Spirit a) to exalt the church; b) to exalt the leaders of the church; c) to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ; d) to exalt the Jewish race. (IX. A 4)
2. Testimony to the Lordship of Jesus can be made only a) by a thorough study of the Bible; b) by a man consecrated to the service of God; c) by the power of the Holy Spirit; d) by intellectually-superior individuals. (IX. A 4)
3. Spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit are a) for the private enjoyment of the individual; b) for the benefit of the whole church; c) for the glorification of the minister; d) for balancing the church budget. (IX. A 5)
4. Who is the personification of wisdom? a) Paul. b) The Holy Spirit. c) The Church. d) Christ. (IX. A 1)
5. The view of the world that excludes the supernatural is called a) biology; b) teleology; c) metabolism; d) naturalism. (IX. A 1)
6. What well-known man, whose name appears frequently in the New Testament, tried to force Christians to pronounce the curse "Anathema Jesus"? a) Paul; b) Peter; c) Timothy; d) Herod the Great. (IX. A 3)
7. When did the Lord Jesus Christ bestow the Holy Spirit upon His disciples? a) At the institution of the Lord's Supper. b) At His ascension. c) At Pentecost. d) At baptism. (IX. A 5)
8. Paul teaches the triunity of the Godhead a) by associating a different aspect of the same spiritual function with each person of the Trinity. b) by giving the illustration of the three-leaf clover. c) by quoting the creed. d) by explaining the word Trinitarian. (IX. A 8)
9. The gift of wisdom is a) an intellectual apprehension of revealed truth. b) the ability to apply truth to circumstances. c) direct understanding of the mind of God. d) ability to speak a language one has never learned. (IX. A 8,9,13,16)
10. When we speak of the mystical body of Christ, we are referring to a) His resurrection body; b) the body He assumed at His Incarnation; c) the Gospel; d) the Church. (IX. A 24)

11. In I Corinthians 13, Paul praises a) brotherly love; b) God-like love; c) ecstatic speech; d) unwavering faith. (IX. B. 1)
12. Paul speaks of the supremacy of love a) in I Cor. 12:27-30; b) in I Cor. 13:13; c) in I Cor. 13:8-12; d) in I Cor. 13:1-3. (IX. B 25)
13. How does Paul emphasise that believers with different gifts contribute to the unity and wholesomeness of the church structure? a) By quoting from the Old Testament. b) By giving an example from his own experience. c) By advocating ecumenism. d) By imagining a conversation between different members of the body. (IX. A. 21)
14. What may we legitimately "covet"? a) The greater spiritual gifts that are most useful in building the Church. b) The superabundance of our neighbour's wealth. c) The gift of tongues. d) The praise of Christian brethren. (IX. A 26)
15. In I Corinthians 13, Paul uses a word for love that is seldom found in the Greek classics. The English word "charity" translates the meaning of the word used in the Latin Version rather than the meaning of the Greek. What is the meaning of the word Paul used? a) God-like love. b) Family affection. c) Philanthropy. d) Sexual love. (IX. B 1)
16. When eloquence does not express the virtue Paul praises in I Corinthians 13, it is a) like the "sounding brass" of a temple gong; b) "like apples of gold in baskets of silver"; c) "like lillies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh"; d) "like clouds and wind without rain." (IX. B 3)
17. One of the characteristics of love is that it is not "puffed up." How many times does Paul say or imply that the Corinthians are "puffed up"? a) Never. b) Once. c) Five times. d) Seven times. (IX. B 12)
18. According to the Authorised Version, love "believeth all things." This means that love is a) blind. b) disposed to believe the best. c) easily deceived. d) unscientific. (IX. B 21)
19. What class of leaders took over the place of the prophets after the canon of Scripture was completed? a) Bishops. b) Scribes. c) Teachers. d) Missionaries. (IX. A 25)
20. What is more permanent than all spiritual gifts? a) Faith. b) Fellowship. c) Hope. d) Love. (IX. B 25)

1. c; 2. c; 3. b; 4. d; 5. d; 6. a; 7. c; 8. a; 9. b; 10. d;
11. b; 12. b; 13. d; 14. a; 15. a; 16. a; 17. c; 18. b;
19. d; 20. d

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Nine

Ten marks will be given for each question answered correctly and adequately. If you are studying for credit, post your finished examination to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P. Those studying for a degree may be asked some questions of this examination when they sit for their monitored, comprehensive examination.

1. List the nine spiritual gifts mentioned in chapter twelve.
2. Explain the source of the gifts. To whom were they available? Why were they given?
3. Describe the gift of different kinds of tongues. Is this the gift that was given the apostles on the day of Pentecost?
4.
 - a. Distinguish between wisdom and knowledge.
 - b. Distinguish between the gift of faith and the working of miracles.
5. Tell all you can about any gift that has not yet been discussed in this examination.
6. Show the relationship between I Corinthians 12 and 1 Corinthians 13.
7. List seventeen characteristics of God-like love.
8.
 - a. What has the Holy Spirit done for all believers?
 - b. Who determines the place a believer occupies in the body of Christ?
 - c. What will outlast the temporary gifts given for ministry in the church?
9. What is Paul's purpose in comparing the church to the human body?
10. List the things the Corinthians were doing that love does not do.

SUBSTITUTE QUESTION

11. Why is love all-important in the individual Christian's life and in the life of the church?

LESSON TEN

SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND PUBLIC WORSHIP



THE CORRECT USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS 12:1-31
THE CONTROLLING POWER OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS 13:1-13
THE COMPARATIVE VALUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS 14:1-40
A RIGHT ESTIMATE OF GIFTS 14:1-25

1. **The Discriminating Test** 14:1-11,13-17
 - a. **APPLIED TO FELLOW CHRISTIANS** vs.2-11,13-17
 - (1) INSTRUCTIVE? vs. 2-11
 - (2) THOUGHTFUL? vs. 13-17
 - b. **APPLIED TO NON-CHRISTIANS** vs. 20-25
 - (1) UNIVERSAL? vs. 23,24a,b
 - (2) CONVICTING? vs. 24c, d; 25
2. **The Clear Conclusions** 14:12, 18, 19, 24, 25
 - a. **APPLIED TO FELLOW CHRISTIANS** vs. 12, 18, 19
 - (1) PROPHECY EDIFIES THE CHURCH v. 12
 - (2) PROPHECY EXERCISES THE MIND vs. 18, 19
 - b. **APPLIED TO NON-CHRISTIANS** vs. 24, 25
 - (1) PROPHECY IS OF UNIVERSAL USE v. 24
 - (2) PROPHECY BRINGS CONVICTION OF SIN vs. 24,25

A RIGHT EXERCISE OF GIFTS 14:26-35

1. **Public Use of the Gift of Tongues** 14:27, 28
 - a. **LIMITED TO THREE** v. 27a
 - b. **ONE AT A TIME** v. 27b
 - c. **ONE INTERPRETER** vs. 27c, 28
2. **Public Use of the Gift of Prophecy** 14:29-36
 - a. **BY MEN** vs. 29-33a
 - (1) **LIMITED TO THREE** v. 29
 - (2) **ONE AT A TIME** vs. 30, 31
 - (3) **UNDER SELF-CONTROL** vs. 32, 33a
 - b. **BY WOMEN** vs. 33b-35
 - (1) **FORBIDDEN?** vs. 33b, 34a
 - (2) **CONFIRMED?** vs. 34b, 35

A RIGHT RECOGNITION OF AUTHORITY 14:36-38

A RIGHT RECOGNITION OF GIFTS 14:39,40

A SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 14:1-40

Among the questions the Corinthian Christians asked Paul were three relating to public worship: proper dress of women attending the worship service, proper observance of the Lord's Supper, and proper use of spiritual gifts. We observed Paul's answers to the first two questions in LESSON EIGHT, and the beginning of his answer to the third question in LESSON NINE. Now in LESSON TEN we will hear the conclusion of Paul's lengthy answer. His instruction in this lesson on THE COMPARATIVE VALUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS (14:1-40) is based upon the content of the two preceding chapters we have already studied: THE CORRECT USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS (12:1-31) and THE CONTROLLING POWER OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS (13:1-13).

This question about spiritual gifts had been prompted by a very pressing problem. Some Corinthian Christians had abused the gift of tongues in revolting excesses that brought shame upon the church. Paul is dealing with this perversion of a God-given gift. At the same time, he gives us many insights into eternal truths that apply to us as much as they do to the Corinthians. He begins by seeking to show, in the light of his teaching in chapters twelve and thirteen, how wrong the Corinthians are in preferring the gift of tongues to the gift of prophecy.

A RIGHT ESTIMATE OF GIFTS 14:1-25 (X. A 1)
In the first section of chapter fourteen, Paul contrasts the usefulness of the gift of prophecy with usefulness of the gift of tongues, and immediately brings us to our first difficulty in interpreting this admittedly difficult chapter: What does Paul mean by prophesying? What does he mean by speaking "in a tongue" (lit. trans.)? Let us think about these two terms that are so crucial to our understanding of this chapter.

It is clear that prophesying is closely related to, but not identical with, preaching, in the original sense of the latter word. Essentially, prophecy is proclaiming the good news concerning Jesus Christ. It has no connection with the common usage of the word "preach" as a giving of moral advice. Whenever this gift of prophecy is exercised, believers are built up in the Christian Faith. Occasionally, the prophet foretells future events (Acts 11:28; 21:10f); generally, he edifies, instructs, consoles and exhorts the local church by ex-

plaining some truth of God's Word. His ministry is that of forth-telling. It is primarily to those who believe (v. 22). It manifests God's presence more than the exercise of any other gift.

The meaning of speaking in a tongue is not quite as easy to define. TODAY'S ENGLISH VERSION of the New Testament translates the word "tongues" as "strange sounds." THE NEW ENGLISH BIBLE translates it "language of ecstasy." Were these "tongues" languages spoken by the peoples of Paul's day, or were they unintelligible utterances addressed only to God?

Some Christians claim that glos-so-la'li-a—the ability to speak in a tongue not previously learned—is the same gift Christ's waiting apostles received on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4-13). They regard this gift as *the sign* that a person



is filled with the Holy Spirit. In recent years, members of various denominations have spoken in tongues and claimed it as the gift Paul is speaking about in this chapter. Present-day writers often refer to this experience as a part of "char-is-mat'ic renewal."

Let us list some of the things Paul says in 12:1 to 14:40, about speaking in a tongue: It is a gift of the Spirit (12:10), given to the church by God (12:28,30). The tongue (*glossa*: language or dialect) is unintelligible (14:2,11) to the speaker and the hearer, unless an interpreter is present. However, we must not assume, as many do, that the tongue could not be known. Paul only points out that many utterances permitted at Corinth were not intelligible to those present. He further urges those who speak in tongues, that had no meaning for the congregation, to seek the additional gift of interpretation (14:13). This gift of tongues is given to attract the attention of unbelievers (14:22), who are favourably impressed—as on Pentecost—when they understand what is said. Paul emphasises that the gift of tongues has value to others, when, and only when, the message is understood by them (14:23,28).

Even if we do not fully understand the characteristics of the gifts of prophecy and tongues, we realise that Paul is looking at each gift closely, in order to evaluate its usefulness in the worship service of the church.

1. **The Discriminating Test 14:1-11, 13-17 (X. A 2)** Paul's test is the double one of love that reveals itself in usefulness. He advises, "Pursue this love" (lit. trans.) that I have just described (chap. 13), but at the same time desire spiritual gifts, especially prophecy, because it is the most useful for building the church (chapter 14). In your desiring of gifts, do not choose showy displays that impress others with your spirituality, but make love and usefulness the standards by which you judge all things, even God-given gifts. In advising his readers to "Follow after love," Paul is presenting the same challenge Jesus gave His prospective disciples, when he said: "Follow Me." The test is a quest—a seeking to personify love in our relations with both believers and unbelievers.

- a. **APPLIED TO FELLOW CHRISTIANS vs. 2-11, 13-17 (X. A 3)** As we apply God-like love to our ministry in the church, we will ask ourselves two searching questions: 1) Does my gift edify the church? 2) Does my gift exercise the mind?

- (1) **INSTRUCTIVE? vs. 2-11 (X. A 4)** Beginning with verse two to the end of verse five, Paul contrasts

the gift of prophecy and the gift of tongues. Let us set down Paul's facts in tabular arrangement that his contrast will not be lost in the multiplicity of words.

THE BELIEVER—

WHO PROPHESES : WHO SPEAKS IN TONGUES:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| (a) <i>speaks to men</i> (2a) | (a) <i>speaks to God</i> (2a) | |
| — <i>to edify them</i> (3a) | — <i>in unintelligible phrases</i> | (2b) |
| — <i>to exhort them</i> (3b) | — <i>in divine mysteries</i> | (2c) |
| — <i>to console them</i> (3c) | — <i>in the spirit</i> (2c) | |
| (b) <i>benefits the church</i> (4b) | (b) <i>benefit himself</i> | (4a) |
| (c) <i>has a greater gift</i> (5) | (c) <i>has a lesser gift</i> | (5) |

Remember, God-like love is not selfish (cf. IX. B 15); it does not seek its own advantage, but advantage for others. As Paul applies this characteristic to the gift of prophecy and the gift of tongues, the superior quality of prophecy becomes self-evident. Paul clearly affirms that prophecy is the greater gift (v. 5). He also states the reason: Prophecy benefits the whole church, while tongues is primarily of personal benefit to the one who possesses the gift (v. 4). The Christian motivated by love will not seek gifts that benefit himself only.



Now in 14:6-11, Paul gives four illustrations of the uselessness of uninterpreted tongues. First, he asks the Corinthians to imagine how effective his promised visit (4:19-21; 11:34) would be if he only spoke to them in tongues (as he could do—v. 18). Since he wants his visit to be profitable, he will make sure that it includes four things that always benefit the church:

- (a) *revelation* of the purposes of God
- (b) *knowledge* of spiritual truth
- (c) *prophecy*—preaching by direct revelation
- (d) *teaching*—explaining the Scriptures

Please note that "a" is closely related to "c," while "b" is primarily related to "d."

Paul's second and third illustrations are taken from the world of music. Paul points out that those who play a flute or a harp must sound the correct pitch of each note and play those notes in the proper sequence and rhythm, or no one will recognise the tune (v. 7). Likewise, unless a bugler sounds a distinct bugle call, the soldiers will not know whether they are being called to breakfast or to battle (v. 8; cf. Num. 10:1-10).



Paul's fourth illustration concerns foreign languages (v. 11). There are over 3,000 different languages, and each one has its own way

of expressing thought (v. 10). Each is a vehicle of intelligent speech; each has significance. But if you do not understand the particular language that is spoken, you are a "barbarian" to the speaker (v. 11; cf. Rom. 1:14). That is, you are like a foreigner to Gre'co-Ro'man culture; you impress members of that culture as constantly saying: "Bar, bar, barbar, bar." You cannot communicate with them, and they cannot communicate with you. In the same way, our spiritual utterances must have meaning for the hearer, or we will fail to communicate spiritual blessing to him.

Whether we interpret speaking in tongues as strange sounds that are impossible to understand, or as intelligible languages neither the speaker nor the hearers understand, Paul's test remains valid.

Now Paul is ready for the second part of his test.

- (2) **THOUGHTFUL?** vs. 13-17 (X. A 5) God has made man with a mind, as well as a heart and a will. Man should worship God with his whole being (Mt. 22:37). This means that he should worship with his "understanding" (v. 14)—that faculty which enables him to think, to judge, to know. However, the understanding is not made use of by those who speak in tongues, or by those who listen (v. 14). Their worship may be *whole-hearted*, but it is not *whole*, since it does not involve the use of the intellectual faculties.

Now Paul is telling the Corinthians, and us, how to put "understanding" into the exercise of the gift of tongues. He says: Pray that you may also interpret (v. 13). In other words, add the dimension of perception to your emotion; add a second gift; add a ministry of instruction to your gift of ecstasy (v. 15).

As he so frequently does, Paul adds an illustration. He supposes the case of a worshipper who praises God worthily in an uninterpreted tongue. Unfortunately, other worshippers cannot join in his praise to God because they do not know what he is saying. This becomes clear by the lack of *Amens* at the conclusion of his speaking (v. 16; cf. I K. 1:36; I Ch. 16:36; Ps. 106:48; Rev. 5:14; 19:4).

Every spiritual gift has its value for the person to whom God gave it (v. 17a). But love must characterise our relations with others. It should characterise every activity of the worship service. Emotional outbursts fall short of the standard set by God-like love, since they are lacking in thoughtfulness for others. Worshipers make contact with the needs of everyday life as they apply their minds to the promises of God's Word.

Paul has been testing the believer's love and service in relation to other believers. Now he shifts the test to non-believers. As previously, he restricts the test to two gifts—prophecy and tongues.

- b. APPLIED TO NON-CHRISTIANS vs. 20-25 (X. A 6)
Thinking of the scorn the non-Christian world heaped upon first-century Christians, Paul counsels the Corinthians: "Do not be childish, my friends" (v. 20a, N. E. B.). Do not be like show-off youngsters, who prattle all sorts of nonsense in an effort to gain attention. The Christian is entrusted with the serious business of introducing the Lord Jesus Christ to a hostile world. This duty requires maturity—a mental maturity characterised by broad wisdom and sound judgement. Only in one area of life can a Christian afford to be childishly innocent and undeveloped. What is that area of life? A Christian should be totally innocent of ill-will (*kak-i'a*; "malice.").

After this challenge to spiritual sanity, Paul

states an important fact and illustrates it from the history of Israel. It is interesting that he gives the illustration before declaring the truth illustrated. What is the statement of fact? That tongues are a sign to unbelievers, not to believers (v. 22). What event of history does he use to illustrate this fact? God's dealing with unbelieving Jews through the As-syr'i-an invasion as prophesied by Isaiah (v. 21; cf. Isa. 28:9-12). (Ask for the LIT course analysing this Old Testament book of prophecy.) When many Israelites refused God's message of love in a language they could understand, God turned them over to heartless foreigners whose language they could not understand. Thus, the unintelligible Assyrian tongue became a judicial sign—a sign of God's judgement on the Northern Kingdom of Israel. In a similar way, the gift of tongues has no spiritual effect upon unbelievers, since it cannot lead them to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. Its only function is as a sign of God's presence, which, for the sinner, can only mean judgement. Prophecy on the other hand is a sign to believers who delight in the presence of God.

This principle is the basis for the third and fourth parts of Paul's test: 1) Does my gift have universal usefulness? 2) Does my gift convict sinners of their rebellion against God?

- (1) Universal? vs. 23, 24a,b (X. A 7) Now Paul imagines a very practical situation (vs. 23,24). He tries to think of the effect speaking in tongues would have upon a non-believer who attended a Christian service for the first time (v. 23). If he happened to visit when every worshipper was uttering unintelligible sounds, he would probably conclude that he had entered a home where all were insane, instead of the home where a worship service was being held. On the other hand, if he visited the worship service when a gifted believer was explaining God's Word, he would be brought face to face with the will of God for his own life (v. 24).

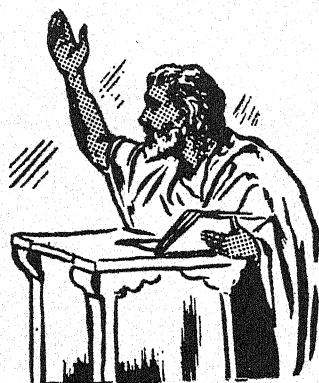
Thus, Paul tests the universal appeal of both prophecy and tongues, and finds that tongues are ineffective in convincing a sinner of his need of Christ. Then, he makes the final test.

- (2) Convicting? vs. 24c, d, 25 (X. A 8) From the practical situations he has imagined in verses twenty-three and twenty-four, Paul examines the convicting powers of both prophecy and tongues, and concludes that tongues is deficient in this characteristic also.

2. The Clear Conclusions vs. 12, 18, 19, 24, 25 (X. A 9)
Although Paul does not reserve his conclusions until the very end of his argument, he does emphasise and apply them at the conclusion of each test. Let us note how precisely he does this in relating prophecy and tongues to both believers and unbelievers.

a. APPLIED TO FELLOW CHRISTIANS vs. 12,18,19 (X. A 10)

- (1) PROPHECY EDIFIES THE CHURCH v. 12 (X. A 11)
Prophecy fulfils the purpose of an oral ministry in the public worship service: it is a means of spiritual benefit for all who are present. Thus, prophecy, not tongues, is the gift to be desired most by those seeking spiritual gifts, and that should include all believers (12: 31; 14:1).



- (2) PROPHECY EXERCISES THE MIND vs. 18, 19 (X. A 12) The Apostle Paul was one of the greatest thinkers this world has known. His epistles are a rational presentation of the Gospel. His present argument is that all Christians should exercise their minds in their

worship of God. It is the gift of prophecy, rather than the gift of tongues, that will enable them to do this.

We should be careful to note that Paul does not condemn tongues. Instead, he voices his own preference and his preference for his converts. See how strongly he states this preference: "In the congregation, I would rather speak *five* intelligible words, for the benefit of others as well as myself, *than thousands* of words in the language of ecstasy" (v. 19, N.E.B.).

It is easy for those who do not possess a gift to discount its importance. This is not what Paul is doing; he excelled in the speaking of tongues (v.18), but his concern for the church caused him to exercise the gift in private rather than make a public display of it. Believers



should not imagine that every impulse arising from fervent devotion must be given unbridled expression. Instead, believers must

look to the results produced. Prophecy, not tongues, exercises the God-given faculty of reason.

b. APPLIED TO NON-CHRISTIANS vs. 24, 25 (X. A 13)

(1) PROPHECY IS OF UNIVERSAL USE. v. 24 (X. A 14) Besides well-grounded believers, two other classes of people were present in most worship services: the "unlearned" (*id-i-o'tes*), believers who did not have the gift of tongues; and the unbelieving, who had no personal knowledge of Christ. Both would regard the uncontrolled use of tongues as childish gibberish. The gift would be exercised to no purpose as far as these people were concerned. Conversely, prophecy would appeal to their understanding and produce an entirely different effect. So we see that prophecy has a universal use—to gifted believers, unlearned believers and unbelievers alike. Tongues cannot meet this test.

(2) PROPHECY BRINGS CONVICTION OF SIN. vs. 24, 25 (X. A 15) The gift of tongues makes no appeal to the conscience of the unbeliever, so it cannot lead to conviction. On the other hand, Paul vividly describes what happens when God's Word is faithfully preached:

(a) *Self-revelation v. 24c* (X. A 16) Prophecy convicts (not "convinces" as in the A. V.) the sinner of his sin. For the first time in his life, he realises that he is in rebellion against his Creator. (cf. Jn. 4:29; Acts 2:37; Heb. 4:12,13)

(b) *Self-condemnation v. 24d* (X. A 17) Prophecy leads the hearer to realise that he is responsible to God (2:5-9; Rom. 14:11, 12). It brings him under *judgement*—his own judgement of himself. The Greek word used here is translated "examine" in 9:3. Prophecy causes a man to examine himself by God's standards, which, for the sinner, can only lead to self-condemnation.

- (c) *Self-perception v.25a* (X. A 18) Prophecy uncovers the hidden things of the heart which the individual had not recognised previously. (cf. Ps. 19:12; 90:8; 139:23)
- (d) *Self-humiliation v.25b* (X. A 19) Prophecy humbles the sinner before God. When the sinner finally faces the truth about himself there is nothing he can do but make a right about-face. As he faces God, he will cry out: "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Lk. 18:13; cf. Isa. 60:14).

What a wonderful summary of the results of prophecy! What a wonderful gift! Covet it; use it; and relegate the gift of tongues to the subordinate place God has given it.

A RIGHT EXERCISE OF GIFTS 14:26-35 (X. B 1) It is necessary for a household, whose members have different abilities and interests, to function by a set of rules. These rules will establish priorities. They will not limit individual freedom, but will regulate it so that the individual is truly free to express himself. The more exuberant the household the more necessary are these rules! At Corinth, there was danger that church worship would become disorderly, because everyone was eager to take part in the service. At times, all those present tried to speak at the same time, including the women. The result could only be labelled *confusion*.

Paul does not want to discourage, but only to regulate, their desire to contribute something to the service. He encourages them to express the message the Holy Spirit has made real to them. He lists five appropriate ways (v. 26) in which they can do this:

By Singing a Psalm: This was a hymn of praise to God. Remember, there were no hymn books in those days. It was necessary for the worshipper to compose his own hymn.

By Explaining a Doctrine: This was instruction on one of the fundamental truths of the Faith. A man with the gift of teachings would naturally perform this service.

By Disclosing a Revelation: This was a truth God had made known directly to the speaker. Only a prophet—one possessing the gift of prophecy—could fulfil this preaching ministry.

By Speaking in a Tongue: This was a message in a language other than the Greek. A worshipper, who was not fluent in the common language of Corinth, might choose to pray or preach in some other language; or someone might express his raptures in the “language of ecstasy” (v. 2, N.E.B.).

By an Interpretation of Tongues: This was an explanation, in the Greek language, of a prayer or a message worshippers would not understand as originally given. The interpreter either translated the message of a non-Greek speaker, or explained the “strange sounds” (v. 2, T.E.V.) of the believer carried beyond himself by strong emotions.

It should be noted that Paul refers to the three principal parts of any worship service: praise, prayer and preaching.

In the preceding verses, Paul established a principle: Those gifts which are most helpful to one’s fellow Christians should be most highly prized. Now he restates (v. 26c) and applies this principle by giving several practical rules for regulating the use of spiritual gifts in public services. Again, he deals specifically with tongues and prophecy.

1. Public Use of the Gift of Tongues 14:27, 28 (X. B 2)

Because it was those who spoke in tongues who disturbed the worship service most frequently, Paul begins with a set of rules to regulate their behaviour. These rules were especially needed in first-century assemblies, since they had no professional ministry at the local level. Anyone with a gift was permitted to minister. Most Corinthians went to service with the expectation of taking part, not of being passive listeners. Many twentieth-century Christians have abandoned this practice to their own spiritual impoverishment. However, the need at Corinth was for regulation; for, there were those who overestimated their ability to benefit the church.

- a. LIMITED TO THREE v. 27a (X. B 3) Paul specifies that there should be no more than three who speak in tongues at any one service.

- b. **ONE AT A TIME** v. 27b (X. B 4) Paul also specifies that two people should not speak in tongues at the same time.
- c. **ONE INTERPRETER** vs. 27c, 28 (X. B 5) Paul further specifies that one interpreter should explain the message of all those who speak in tongues. This would make it impossible for more than one to speak at a time. It would also insure that every worshipper could understand all that was being said. If the one with a gift of tongues had no interpreter to make his contribution meaningful to the audience, Paul instructs him to exercise his gift privately.

Thus, we see that Paul's three-fold regulation has the edification of all believers as its underlying principle.



2. **Public Use of the Gift of Prophecy 14:29-36 (X. B 6)**

Let us note that Paul gives very similar rules for the regulation of the superior gift of prophecy. On this subject, however, he has a different set of rules for men and women.

- a. **BY MEN** vs. 29-33a (X. B 7) Paul sets down three rules: one regulating the number of speakers; another, the manner of speech; and third, the control of the speaker.
 - (1) **LIMITED TO THREE** v. 29 (X. B 8) As in the case of tongues, Paul specifies that no more than two or three prophets at the most, should

Speak at any one service. Those who listen are not to be passive; they should silently judge what is being said (cf. IX. A 14; II Peter 2:1). Speakers with a prophetic gift will simply act as God's mouthpiece (Jer. 1:9; Ezek. 3:27). False prophets will speak out of their own hearts (Jer. 23:16; Ezek. 13:2).

- (2) ONE AT A TIME vs. 30, 31 (X. B 9) As in the case of tongues, Paul specifies that only one believer is to speak at a time. Each is to recognise that God has given the gift of prophecy to others as well as himself. No one prophet is to take all the time allotted for preaching, but should leave time for others with the same gift. The prophet should know when to "keep silent," that is, when to bring his message to a close.
- (3) UNDER SELF-CONTROL vs. 32, 33a (X. B 10) Just as the believer speaking in tongues is under the discipline of his interpreter, so the prophet should be under the discipline of his own spirit. Paul states this in the form of a maxim: "The spirits of prophets are subject to prophets" (lit. trans.). Paul means that spiritual expression is under the control of the prophet. Those possessed by evil spirits may lose control of their own faculties, but the Holy Spirit never violates a person's will. A believer may claim that the Holy Spirit so moved him that he could not keep silent. However, Paul rejects such a claim. Spiritual messages come from God. God acts in accordance with His own nature. He is "a God of peace" (cf. Rom. 15:33; I Thes. 5:13) in the widest sense; He reconciles men to Himself, and thus, to one another. When a prophet loses control of himself and imposes upon others, he is not being led by the Spirit of God. Those under the direction of the Holy Spirit are peaceful and orderly.

It is characteristic of Paul to base his

instruction on the nature and Person of God. Such instruction is timeless, like the Being from Whom it springs.

- b. BY WOMEN vs. 33b-35 (X. B 11) Punctuation marks are modern devices for making reading easier and faster. There are no punctuation marks in the ancient Greek manuscripts; so, it is sometimes difficult to know where a sentence begins or ends. We have such a sentence before us now; and we have chosen to include the latter part of verse thirty-three with the beginning of verse thirty-four. This choice results in the following sentence: "As in all the churches of the saints, let your women keep silence in the churches." If this formation of the sentence is correct, it sets forth an observation concerning the whole church, as well as a special rule for Corinthian women.

After giving three rules for regulating the prophesying of men, Paul indicates that these rules do not apply to Corinthian women who are believers. Where prophecy is concerned Corinthian women are subject to a different set of rules.

- (1) FORBIDDEN? vs. 33b, 34a (X. B 12) In both the Old and the New Testaments, spiritual leadership is entrusted to men rather than women (cf. Gen. 3:16; I Tim. 2:8-12). In 11:5, Paul had said: Whenever a woman prays or prophesies, she must wear a veil. Now, he seems to contradict that statement by forbidding women to preach, or even speak, in public service. How can we harmonise these differences? Does the Holy Spirit edify the church through women, or not?

Different expositors have suggested different solutions. We will note three different views:

—*that*, 14:33b-36 was a marginal reference mistakenly copied into the text of Scripture;

—*that*, 11:2-16 refers to small private gatherings, while 14:33b-36 regulates behaviour in public worship;

—*that*, 11:2-16 permits women to minister to the church, while 14:33b-36 forbids them to interrupt the worship service with questions.

Please remember: the *Scriptures* are not inconsistent; only our *interpretations* of the *Scriptures* have this human weakness. Let us seek more guidance directly from the Word of God:

Acts 1:14:- Women were included in the 120 filled with the Spirit at Pentecost.

Acts 2:17, 18:- Women were included in Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28,29) which, according to Peter, began to be fulfilled at Pentecost (*Acts 2:16*).

Acts 21:9:- Philip, the evangelist, had four daughters who prophesied.

Philippians 4:3:- Women "worked side by side with [Paul] in telling the Good News to others" (*Living Letters*).

Even in Old Testament times there were prophetesses: Exodus 15:20; Judges 4:4; II Kings 22: 14; Nehemiah 6:14; Luke 2:36.

Next, we must seek for any Biblical statements that seem to contradict those in the list above.

I Corinthians 14:23-36:- This is our present passage forbidding women to interrupt worship with questions.

I Timothy 2:12a:- Women are forbidden to teach (from *did-as'ko*), that is, to deliver discourses on doctrine (*did-ach-e'*).

I Timothy 2:12b:- Women are forbidden to accept offices of authority in the church

that would set them over men, and especially over their own husbands.

Now, we must interpret our present passage (v. 34a) in its context and in the light of all Scriptures which deal with this subject.

We have seen that it is the woman's privilege to prophesy as long as she does it with modesty and propriety (11:5). We have been told also that it is a "shame" for her to even speak in church (v. 35b). What sort of shame? Was it immoral? Was it sinful? No! It was a "shame" in the sense that it violated the social customs of the day. It violated the generally accepted behaviour (i.e. the etiquette) of society. For this reason, it brought discredit to the cause of Christ. This would be especially true of married women, for they had voluntarily placed themselves under the authority of their husbands. For a wife to confront the public, even in the service of her Lord, would be to usurp her husband's place (cf. VII. B 2,5). Thus, we see that it is the woman's privilege to prophesy; but Paul suggests that she renounce that privilege in courteous submission to prevailing customs. However, this prohibition only applied to public church services. At home, as we shall see, she is free to ask questions (v.35) and to teach (cf. Acts 18:26).

- (2) CONFIRMED? vs. 34b, 35 (X. B 13) Paul is declaring a revelation from God. Does that mean that he expects the Corinthians to accept his word without any supporting proofs? No! He points out that the law (v. 34c, d; cf. Gen. 3:16) is in agreement with the Gospel (v. 33b) on this principle of submission (cf. Eph. 5:22-24). He also implies that this prohibition is given to preserve the God-given authority of the husband in the home and in the church (v.35).

A RIGHT RECOGNITION OF AUTHORITY 14:36-38
(X. C 1) The Apostle Paul has finished his listing of rules to

regulate the use of spiritual gifts. Now, he speaks about the self-authenticating nature of the revelation he has given.

In verse thirty-six, Paul appeals to the Corinthians through two rhetorical questions: "Did the Word of God (i.e. the Gospel) originate with you? Or are you the only people to whom it came?" (v. 36, N.E.B.) Obviously, the Corinthians had received the Gospel through the Apostle Paul, the very one who was announcing this further revelation. Is it logical to accept some revelations of God and not others?

Then Paul suggests that a true prophet will recognise a genuine revelation from God. If the Corinthians really possess the spiritual gifts they claim, they will recognise his words as the commandments of God (v.37), for he speaks with apostolic authority. Yet this authority can be rejected. Like atheism, such rejection is self-chosen ignorance. Paul has declared God's truth. Responsibility now rests upon the believer who has heard the truth. He will not be forced, but he will bear the consequences of his choice. This same principle applies to *all* of God's Word. We have it in our hands. Are we embracing every opportunity to make it our very own? Or, are we choosing to remain ignorant?

A RIGHT RECOGNITION OF GIFTS 14:39,40 (X. D 1)

This subject of spiritual gifts is so important that Paul cannot terminate it without giving us a neat summary that will be easy to remember. He says: The gift of prophecy is to be preferred, but the gift of tongues must not be despised.

Then Paul states a regulation that applies to the use of every gift. "Let all things be done decently (i.e. in good taste) and in order." These two characteristics of comeliness and orderliness are things that can be said about God (i.e. attributes). They are also things that should be said about every local church.

A SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 14:1-40 (X. E 1)

This lesson deals with a chapter of the Bible that is difficult to interpret; so, no one should be overly confident about his own interpretation.

First Corinthians 14 is almost entirely concerned with a comparison of two spiritual gifts: speaking in a tongue and prophesying. There are two contradictory opinions about the

gift of tongues: One interpretation holds that these tongues were ecstatic cries uttered in sounds that had no resemblance to any ordinary speech. The other interpretation holds that tongues are intelligible languages but unknown to those who speak them. Prophecy, on the other hand, is the forth-telling of a God-given message that occasionally includes foretelling (cf. Acts 11:28).

From the very beginning of the chapter, Paul contrasts the gift of prophecy with that of tongues. Through a succession of arguments and illustrations, he proves that prophecy is superior to tongues. It is superior, because, unlike tongues, it provides spiritual nourishment to the entire membership of the church. Paul also points out the limited value of tongues. He insists that an interpreter is needed, if tongues is to be of any benefit to the church. He also imagines the effect of uncontrolled tongues on visitors to the worship service: They may think that those who profess to be followers of Christ are insane.

In the second major part of the chapter, Paul writes about the proper use of spiritual gifts. He gives three rules that apply to all those who speak in tongues. In regard to prophecy, he formulates a special set of rules for the men and a separate set for the women. In all of this, his principal concern is the spiritual welfare of the church. Although he regulates participation in church services, yet he expects every male believer to contribute to the welfare of the church by taking part in the worship service.

In concluding the chapter, Paul states that the things he has written are not his own opinions; they are the commandments of the Lord. Then, he sums up his instruction by giving the place of preference to prophecy, but at the same time protecting tongues from those who would denounce the gift. His concluding words are a general rule for conduct in the church: "Let all things be done decently and in order."



EXERCISES

Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

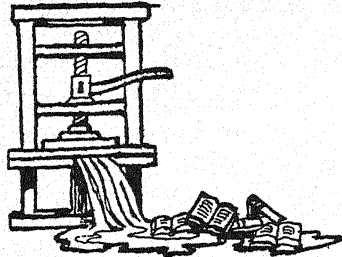
1. What incorrect preference of the Corinthians led Paul to write I Corinthians 14 ? a) They preferred to sit at the back of the assembly. b) They preferred to hold their services on Saturday rather than Sunday. c) They preferred the gift of prophecy to all other gifts. d) They preferred the gift of tongues to the gift of prophecy.
(X. Intro.)
2. What is the literal meaning of the word "tongue" used in chapter fourteen ? a) The movable flesh in the mouth used for talking. b) A peculiar mannerism in speaking. c) A jet of flame such as appeared over each disciple at Pentecost. d) A dialect or language, i.e. rational speech.
(X. A 1)
3. In the Greek language, the word prophecy means a) prediction. b) inspiration. c) foretelling the future. d) forth-telling, or proclaiming. (X. A 1)
4. Anything done in the worship service must conform to this basic principle: a) "Let all things be done unto edification." b) "Let the women speak first." c) "Let only the prophets speak." d) "Forbid speaking in tongues." (X. A 3,4)
5. Paul challenges believers to seek the greater spiritual gifts a) that help the church increase its fiscal income. b) that make their possessors self-sufficient and self-satisfied. c) that benefit the whole body of Christ. d) that draw attention to gifted individuals. (X. A 3, 4)
6. The man who prophesies edifies a) no one. b) angels. c) the church. d) only himself. (X. A 4)
7. Although speaking in an unknown tongue may be a thrilling experience, it has definite shortcomings: a) It only gives instruction in nonspiritual matters. b) It can only be practised in private. c) It is not a true gift from God. d) It does not edify the church. (X. A 4)
8. What is meant by speaking with "understanding"? a) Speaking intelligent sense that conveys a clear meaning. b) Speaking in scholarly language. c) Speaking like an

oratorical genius, such as the Apostle Paul. d) Speaking a message thought out carefully beforehand. (X. A 5)

9. The expression, "In malice be ye children" means:
a) Without getting caught, do as much injury as you can to those of other religious persuasions. b) Vengeance belongs to God, not to the believer. c) We should be as innocent as children regarding ill-will. d) The believer should be childish in all things. (X. A 6)
10. The divine purpose in bestowing the gift of tongues is
a) to serve as a sign to unbelievers. b) to call attention to gifted Christians. c) to show that believers are "a peculiar people." d) to make it unnecessary for missionaries to study foreign languages. (X. A 6; cf. A 1)
11. In the Apostle Paul's judgement, which gift was more important than tongues? a) Prophecy. b) Miracles. c) Teaching. d) Interpretation. (X. A 11)
12. Speaking with tongues a) is more important than; b) is less important than; c) is just the same as; d) completely eclipses; prophesying. (X. A 12)
13. To what three parts of the worship service does the Apostle Paul refer? a) The call to worship, the sermon and the benediction. b) Prayer, praise, and preaching. c) Singing, testifying and preaching. d) Preaching, giving financial support and giving attention to the Word spoken. (X. B 1)
14. As Paul uses the word "barbarian," it means a) a person who cuts hair; b) an uncivilised person; c) a person without refinement; d) a person who does not understand your language. (X. A 3)
15. How can understanding be added to an emotional display of tongues? a) By forbidding anyone to speak in tongues. b) By explaining God's purpose in giving the gift of tongues. c) By interpreting what is said. d) By permitting only one person to speak at a time. (X. A 4)
16. Upon what does Paul base his regulation of peace and order? a) Upon the nature of God d) Upon common sense. c) Upon a decision of the Council at Jerusalem. d) Upon a desire to please the non-Christian community. (X. B 10)
17. Paul states three rules that should govern the public use of the gift of tongues. The first two are that no more than three persons should speak in tongues at any one service and that they should speak one at a time. The

third rule is a) that the speaker must discipline his own spirit. b) that the speaker should make previous arrangements with the pastor. c) that the speaker must be limited to five minutes. d) that the speaker must have his message interpreted for all to understand. (X. B 5, 10)

18. Why was it a "shame" for women believers to speak in the public worship services at Corinth? a) Because it was sinful. b) Because women are inferior to men. c) Because it violated social customs. d) Because it violated the moral code. (X. B 12)
19. The instruction the Apostle Paul gives in I Corinthians 14 is a) his own reasoned opinions. b) divine revelation and therefore authoritative. c) a set of rules he devised for the Corinthians only, since he had established the Corinthian church. d) not for the church today. (X. C 1)
20. Paul gives a general directive for the way a worship service should be conducted. He says: a) "Do all according to the inspiration of the moment." b) "Do all decently and in order." c) "Do all according to the desires of the pastor." d) "Do all by decision of the church committee." (X. D 1)



1. d; 2. d; 3. d; 4. a; 5. c; 6. c; 7. d; 8. a; 9. c; 10. a; 11. a;
12. b; 13. b; 14. d; 15. c; 16. a; 17. d; 18. c; 19. b; 20. b.

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Ten

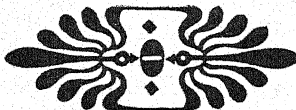
Answer ten questions. Ten marks will be given for each question correctly answered. You will NOT be penalised for expressing opinions that differ from those in this text-book, provided you support your opinions with Scripture. Please try to distinguish the facts of the lesson from your opinion concerning their interpretation.

1. Answer "Yes" or "No" to each of the following questions or statements :
 - a. Does the Holy Spirit inspire the confusion we sometimes witness in church services ?
 - b. Has anyone ever been convicted of his sin by listening to a believer he could not understand?
 - c. Is it possible that an unsaved person who hears a believer speak in tongues may consider him insane and misjudge the cause of Christ ?
 - d. Can a believer give his hearty word of consent ("Amen") when he listens to tongues that are not interpreted ?
 - e. Was it necessary to interpret the tongues spoken at Pentecost ?
2. Answer the Roman Catholic who says : "Naturally I do not understand what is being said at Mass. I do not attend worship to understand what the priest is saying, but to take part in what he is doing."
3. Do the principles Paul lays down in I Corinthians 14 apply to all Christian churches at all times or only to the church at Corinth ? Do *all* the principles apply ? Explain the reasons for your answer.
4.
 - a. What three classes of people were told to keep silent in the church ?
 - b. What should be the purpose of anyone who speaks at the worship services of the church ?
 - c. What principle should govern the choice of the language used at any worship service ?
 - d. What is meant by the word "church" in I Corinthians 14 ?
 - e. What was Paul's personal desire relative to the gifts of prophecy and tongues, both of which he possessed ?

5. Answer the man who says: "You cannot claim to be baptised with the Holy Spirit unless you have spoken in tongues."
6. Answer the woman who says: "Women have just as much right as men to lead a worship service and expound the Word of God. Don't you realise that we are living in the twentieth century when women occupy the very highest places in education, industry and even government?"
7. Answer the minister who says: "The layman's place is in the pew, not in the pulpit. Only ordained men have a right to speak in the worship service."
8. From Paul's teaching in I Corinthians 14 and from your general knowledge of his life and ministry, try to reconstruct Paul's own practice in regard to speaking in tongues.
9.
 - a. Describe a worship service as conducted by the Corinthian Christians.
 - b. Make up a form of service adhering to the principles set down by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 14.
10. State the basic principles, and make a separate list of the lesser directives Paul gives the Corinthians for regulating the conduct of their worship services.

SUBSTITUTE QUESTIONS

11. What relationship exists between the Pentecostal manifestation of tongues (Acts 2:2-4) and the gift of tongues coveted by many Corinthian Christians? State your own conviction and explain why you do not believe the theories put forward by those with whom you disagree.
12. Either support or disprove the following statement: The true gift of tongues was given for the establishment of the church and is not a part of God's plan for His church today.



LESSON ELEVEN

THE BODILY RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD KEYSTONE OF THE GOOD NEWS

HISTORICAL FACT OF THE RESURRECTION 15:1-34

PROCLAIMED BY THE GOSPEL 15:3-11

1. Christ Died for our Sins v. 3b
2. Christ Was Buried v. 4a
3. Christ Rose From the Dead v. 4b
4. Christ Appeared to His Disciples vs. 5-11
 - a. To CEPHAS v. 5a
 - b. To THE TWELVE v. 5b
 - c. To MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED v. 6
 - d. To JAMES v. 7a
 - e. To ALL THE APOSTLES v. 7b
 - f. To THE APOSTLE PAUL vs. 8-11
 - (1) PAUL'S WITNESS v. 8
 - (2) PAUL'S TESTIMONY vs. 9-11

DENIED BY THE UNREASONABLE 15:12-19

1. The Consequences of Denial vs. 13-18
2. The Conclusion About Denial v. 19

ASSURED BY CHRIST'S RESURRECTION 15:20-28

1. The Consequences of Resurrection vs. 20b-28b
 - a. THE RISEN CHRIST BEGINS A NEW PROGRAMME vs. 20b-26
 - b. THE RISEN CHRIST COMPLETES THE KINGDOM PROGRAMME vs. 27,28b
2. The Consummation of Resurrection v. 28c

SUBSTANTIATED BY CHRISTIANS' LIVES 15:29-34

1. Why Are They Baptised? v. 29
2. Why Do They Live Dangerously? vs. 30-34

REVEALED NATURE OF RESURRECTION 15:35-58

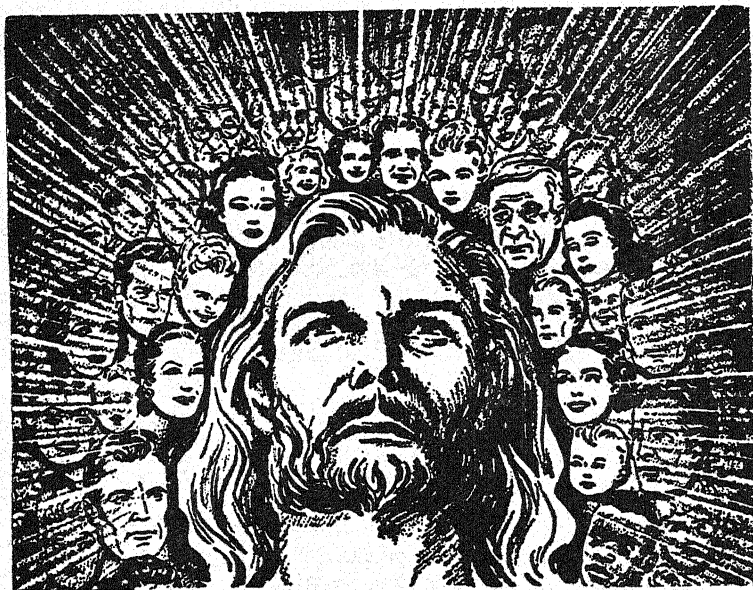
A NEW KIND OF BODY 15:35-49

1. The Process of Resurrection vs. 35-41
2. The Product of Resurrection vs. 42-49
 - a. THE SAME YET DIFFERENT vs. 42-44b
 - b. LIKE THE LAST, NOT THE FIRST vs. 44c-49

A NEW KIND OF LIFE 15:50-58

1. A Resplendent Revelation vs. 51-56
2. A Paean of Praise v. 57
3. An Expedient Exhortation v. 58
 - a. STEADFAST
 - b. UNMOVABLE
 - c. ABOUNDING

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 15:1-58



PROOF, PATTERN, PLEDGE

Our present lesson deals with one of the most precious pieces of literature to be found anywhere. The fifteenth chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians is one of his noblest literary achievements. It is also the longest and most difficult chapter in this epistle. So, read all fifty-eight verses carefully. Many of these verses will sound familiar to you, because you have heard them read on Easter or at funeral services. Nevertheless, read the chapter several times before you begin to study the lesson material below. Approach your study reverently; by analysing the testimony of the other apostles and by direct revelation, Paul parts the veil between this life and the life to come. The glimpse of future glories he gives us is unique; it is resplendent with Christ-inspired hope and bright with the certainty of divine promise.

The Apostle Paul wrote I Corinthians 15 in answer to those at Corinth who were saying: There is no such thing as resurrection of the body. His answer to these Corinthian doubters is our earliest account concerning the resurrection. It is independent evidence. It probably was written about

A.D. 54. This was before any of the Gospel writers had penned their historical accounts of Christ's resurrection, with the possible exception of Mark.

To the philosophically-minded Greek, the very idea of bodily resurrection was ridiculous, even laughable (Acts 17:32). He regarded the body as a prison or tomb in which the soul was held captive. Much as he loved life, he regarded death as a release. Set free from its enslavement to the body, the soul was reabsorbed into the source of life from which it came. Thus, the average Greek thought of himself as having a body which was the very opposite of his soul: the body was human and temporary; the soul was a pure spark of deity and was eternal. Accordingly, he believed in the immortality of his soul (that the divine spark he called soul would never die), but he did not believe that his body shared this same endlessness. In his judgement, his body was not worth saving. For him, bodily resurrection was undesirable, unthinkable.

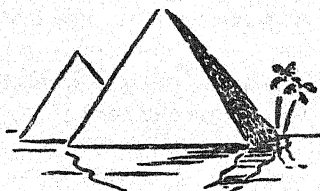
These non-Christian ideas about life after death greatly influenced many Greek Christians. They did not doubt the resurrection of Jesus; but they did question the resurrection of believers' bodies. Paul answers that a denial of bodily resurrection is also a denial of the resurrection of Christ.

Some of the Christians at Corinth had come from a Jewish background. Didn't they believe in bodily resurrection even before they became Christians? Doesn't the Old Testament teach both the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the body?

Yes, the very first book of the Old Testament reveals that man was created for immortality. The very presence of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden meant that man was created to inherit eternal life (Gen. 2:9, 16, 17; 3:22-24). God's warning concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil implied eternal life for those who did not eat of it. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament, immortality of the soul is taken for granted (because of man's relationship with an eternal God) and hope for the resurrection of the body is frequently put into words (Job. 19:25, 26; Ps. 16:10,11; Isa. 25:8; 26:19; Dan. 12:2). Yet, it was a belief without hope. The unseen world had no attraction. It offered no joy, no warmth and no

companionship. It is Christ and His resurrection that have put content and hope into the Old Testament belief.

Let us be very clear concerning the subject Paul is discussing in this chapter. He is *not* talking about immortality of the soul; everyone at Corinth believed that. He is talking about the resurrection of the body of the believer—the believer's return to life in a bodily form. This is a very different belief from that of the Greeks. Like almost all peoples who do not believe in bodily resurrection, the Greeks believed in the immortality of the soul. They believed that the body returned to the elements from which it came, but that the soul survived physical death. This has been an all but universal belief of mankind. Paul insists that the Christian has something better.



In answering and instructing the Corinthians, Paul first establishes the fact of bodily resurrection and then explains how it differs from the life we know.

THE HISTORIC FACT OF BODILY RESURRECTION 15:1-34 (XI. A 1)

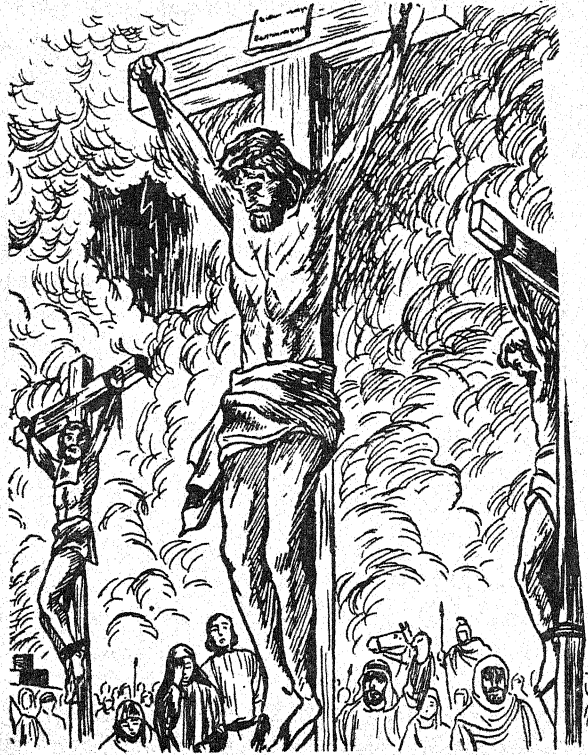
The Apostle Paul bases belief in bodily resurrection upon the historic fact of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was one of the important facts of the Gospel Paul had preached in Corinth (v. 1a; cf. I. C 1-6). Many had believed and were baptised (Acts 18:8). As Paul recalls these things, he reminds the Corinthians of their ties with this Gospel: First, they received it (v. 1b); now, they are standing in it (v. 1c; cf. Rom 5:2); and furthermore, they are being saved by it (v. 2a; lit. trans.). The "good news" Paul preached relates to their past, their present and their future. But this free gift of past, present and future salvation imposes responsibilities. It is a deposit, a treasure, that must be guarded (v. 2c). If any fundamental part of the Gospel, like belief in a bodily resurrection, is not held to be true, they will have believed in vain. Is Paul implying that the Corinthians did not have enough faith, or that they did not have the right kind of faith? No! No one needs "great faith" to be saved. The important thing is the *Object* of our faith. Have

we put our faith in a *risen* Christ? Certainly any faith in a dead Christ would be vain faith (cf. v. 17). Paul is about to test this possibility and the thought already intrudes into his instruction.

PROCLAIMED BY THE GOSPEL 15:3-11 (XI. A 2)
Paul first seeks to establish the resurrection by pointing out that it is not an isolated fact. It is an important part of the Gospel. It cannot be removed from the "good news" without destroying the whole fabric of our Faith. It is an integral part of God's plan of salvation.

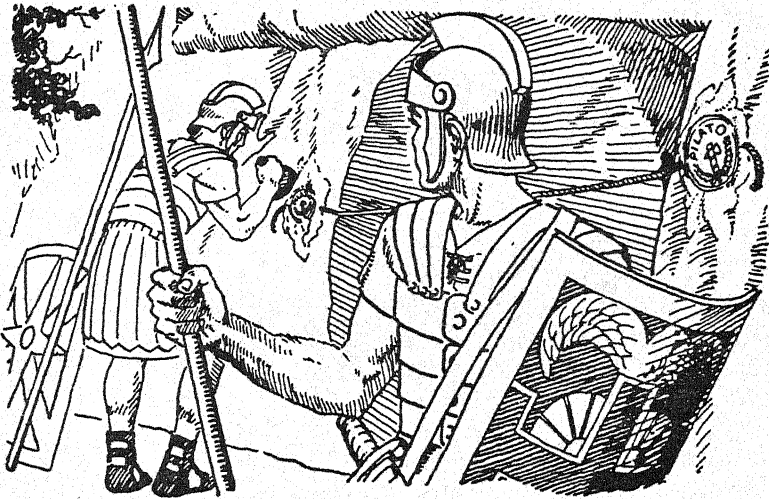
Did you notice the words Paul uses to introduce this section? "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received . . ." Do these words remind you of any subject we have studied already? Do you remember that Paul introduced his account of the Lord's Supper with very similar words? "I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you . . ." In introducing both subjects the Apostle Paul is precise and deliberate; his very manner alerts us to the importance of the subject he is about to discuss. In our present chapter, that subject is a summary of the content of the Gospel. He further emphasises that each historic fact is "according to the Scriptures." Like the Lord's Supper, the Gospel did not originate with Paul; he only preached what he had received. What are the great facts of the Gospel Paul received?

1. **Christ Died for Our Sins.** v. 3b (XI. A 3) The circumstances of Christ's death are described in detail in all four Gospels (Mt. 27:35; Mk. 15:24; Lk. 23:33; Jn. 19:23). Many Old Testament passages, including Isaiah 53:5,6,8,11,12; Daniel 9:26 and Zechariah 13:7, were fulfilled by His death. His death is one of the best attested facts of history: It was predicted (Gen. 3:15) and described (cf. Ps. 22) long before it took place, and it was witnessed by hundreds of people when it did take place (Lk. 23:27, 35). This well-attested fact of Christ's death becomes "good news" when we learn from the Scriptures that it was "for our sins"—in order that man might be forgiven and delivered from sin (cf. Gal. 1:4; II Cor. 5:21). Paul says that both the *fact* and the *meaning* of Christ's death are clearly foretold in the Scriptures (cf. Acts 2:23; Isa. 53:7,8 as quoted in Acts 8:32,33).



2. **Christ Was Buried.** v. 4a (XI. A 4) The burial of Christ was proof of His death. This fact was foretold in Isaiah 53:9. Each Gospel writer stresses the fact that the body of Jesus was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Ar-i-mathae'a (Mt. 27:59,60; Mk. 15:43; Lk. 23:50-53; Jn. 19:38-42). Note that each detail of the funeral is mentioned: the attendants, the manner of preparing the body, the location of the tomb, the reason for haste. Christ's disciples may have been in confusion about many things, including God's purpose for Christ's death; but, they knew exactly where Jesus' body was placed. Moreover, the seal of the Roman government made Christ's death official. Pilate did not deliver Christ's body to Joseph until he had verified Christ's death from the man officially entrusted with His crucifixion (Mk. 15:43-45).

This evidence that the tomb of Joseph was occupied is most significant in view of the emptiness of the tomb three



days later. His burial gives material proof for the reality of His resurrection.

3. Christ Rose from the Dead. v. 4b (XI. A 5) Each of the eleven apostles and Paul, the apostle born out of proper time, became witnesses of the resurrection. Most of them sealed their testimony with their own blood. Like Christ's death, His resurrection was "according to the Scriptures." It is pictured in the Levitical feasts (Lev. 23:10-14), in Jonah's experience (esp. Jonah 1:17), and by many prophetic statements (Ps. 16:10b quoted in Acts 2:27b; Ps. 2:7, Ps. 16:10 and Isa. 55:3 quoted in Acts 13:33-37). Jesus always appealed to this coming event whenever asked for a sign of His Messiahship or His deity (Jn. 2:19; cf. Mt. 27:39,40). Each of the four Gospels records the immediate evidences of Christ's resurrection. In the process they also admit the reluctance of the original witnesses to believe the evidence presented to them. Yet, they all insist that the tomb was empty (Mt. 28:6; Mk. 16:6; Lk. 24:6; Jn. 20:6-8, 11,12) and that the miracle took place on the *third day* after Christ's death (v. 4a; cf. Hosea 6:2; Mk. 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Lk. 24:21; Acts 10:40). All four Gospel writers agree (Mt. 28:1; Mk. 16:2; Lk. 24:1; Jn. 20:1) that Jesus rose from the dead on the day *after* the Sabbath. Mark specifically states that the Sabbath was past (Mk. 16:1). He also states that Jesus died on the day of preparation, "the



day *before the Sabbath*" (Mk. 15:42). This three-day period was "according to the Scriptures" (Mt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Mk. 9:31; 10:34; Lk. 9:22; 18:33; 24:7, 46; Acts 10:40) and was, according to the Greek historian, Herodotus, the so-called father of history, the usual period of waiting to establish death before embalming a body (ii:86-89). As soon as Jesus' death was established without the shadow of a doubt, He rose again from the dead.

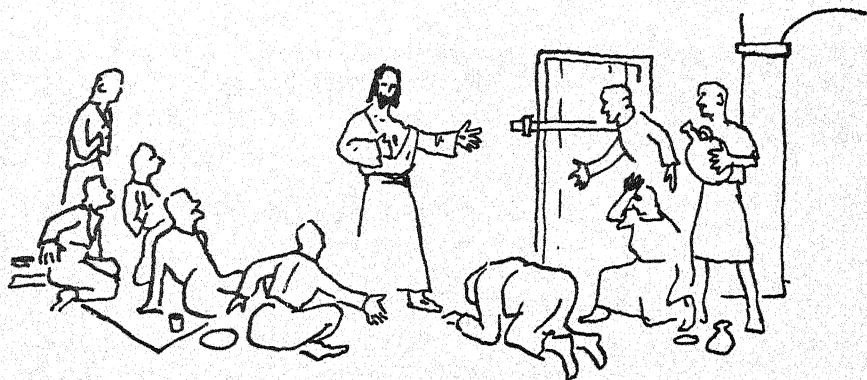
4. **Christ Appeared to His Disciples.** vs. 5-11 (XI. A 6)

Although the disciples were startled from their bereavement first of all by the empty tomb, Scripture mentions only one of them who was led to belief by this circumstantial evidence (Jn. 20:8). It was Christ's appearances that assured them of His resurrection. It was the risen Christ's fellowship with them that made them witnesses of His resurrection. Just as Christ's burial gave positive proof of His death, so His bodily appearances gave positive proof of His resurrection (Acts 10:40). From Christ's various appearances to those who believed on Him and loved Him, Paul mentions only six.

- a. TO CEPHAS v. 5a (XI. A 7) Peter actually *saw* the risen Lord (cf. Lk. 24:34; I Jn. 1:1,2) although this personal interview is nowhere described in Scripture.

This special appearance should not be confused with Christ's private conversation with Peter on the shore of the Sea of Galilee which took place sometime after. (Jn. 21:15-22).

- b: TO THE TWELVE v. 5b. (XI. A 8) "The twelve" is a term used many times in reference to those disciples who left all to follow Jesus (cf. Mk. 2:14). Use of the term does not mean that every member of the group was present. Judas committed suicide before the resurrection took place. He did not see the risen Lord. Thomas was absent (Jn. 20:19-24) when Jesus appeared to "the twelve," (that is, to ten of the remaining eleven disciples) on that first resurrection day. A week later (Jn. 20:26-29), Thomas was present with the other ten when Jesus again appeared to "the twelve," and especially to Thomas. Thus we see that "the twelve" was used as a technical term for those who were closest to Jesus. It is not the exact number present, but the double confirmation of Christ's resurrection that is important.



- c. TO MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED v. 6 (XI. A 9) The time and place of this appearance is not mentioned, but it could have been the occasion referred to in Matthew 28:16-20. The "eleven" may have been joined by other believers in Galilee, just as they were joined by a multitude of people when Jesus spoke the Sermon on the Mount. In any event, the largeness of the group who saw the Lord provides

unquestionable proof of His resurrection. Moreover, most of them were alive when Paul wrote his account and could have been questioned concerning the event. Their number even then would have been at least 250 individual witnesses.

Paul's remark about the others of this group is very interesting: "Some are fallen asleep." By this comforting metaphor for death, Paul would remind his readers of the temporary nature of death. Just as sleep ends with waking, so death will soon end in resurrection.

- d. To JAMES v. 7a (XI. A 10) James was the brother, or perhaps half-brother, of our Lord, who consistently refused to believe in Him (Mt. 13:55; Jn. 7:5). Paul is the only one who mentions Christ's appearance to him; yet, that appearance must have convinced James of his mistaken views. From that moment on, James became a staunch disciple of Christ, and was soon the foremost leader in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 12:17).
- e. To ALL THE APOSTLES v. 7b (XI. A 11) Paul is emphasising that this appearance was to the apostles as a group. This was possibly the occasion when Thomas was present. Jesus had appeared to individuals, and he had appeared to whole companies of people. He had appeared inside a building, and He had appeared in the out-of-doors. He had appeared under artificial light, and He had appeared in broad daylight. He had appeared in Judaea, and He had appeared in Galilee. The very diversity of the circumstances under which He appeared made hallucination and trickery impossible. Only those who wilfully tried to suppress the truth (Mt. 28:11-15) denied the fact of Christ's resurrection at the time it took place. The confirmation of the basic historic facts of the Gospel — Christ's death, confirmed by His burial, and now Christ's resurrection, confirmed by His appearances — establishes all lesser facts that are a part of the "Good News." But, Paul still has one more clinching proof to add.

- f. TO THE APOSTLE PAUL vs. 8-11 (XI. A. 12) Paul himself was an eye-witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. So he closes this series of appearances with his own testimony concerning Christ's resurrection (v. 8) and its influence on his life (vs. 9-11).

(1) PAUL'S WITNESS

v. 8. (XI. A 13)

Paul's witness to the resurrection is unique in that Christ appeared to him after His ascension. Luke, the early historian of the church, describes Paul's experience (Acts 9:1-9), and on two occasions, Paul relates the details of that

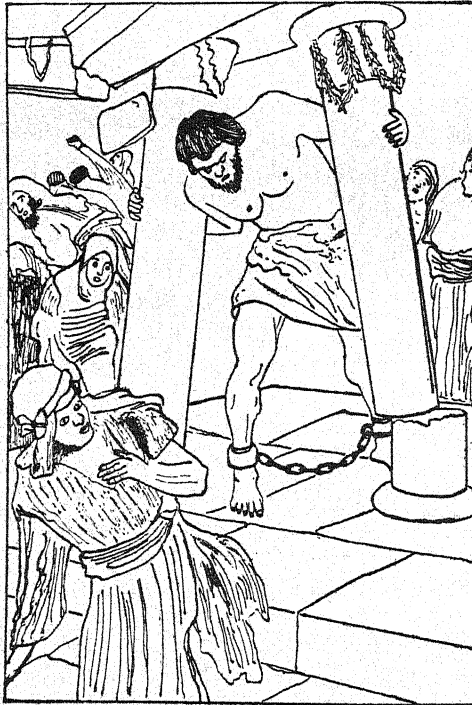


experience while giving his testimony: first, to Jews in the Temple at Jerusalem who tried to kill him (Acts 22:1-16), and later, to Herod Agrippa, while giving his defence in the court at Caes-a-re'a (Acts 26:12-20). In 9:1 Paul bases his apostolic authority on this very experience that led to his conversion: "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ?" Remember, an apostle was one especially chosen by Christ as a witness of His resurrection. Paul qualified. But he has more to say about this experience than the external circumstances. The outward manifestation of the risen Christ brought inward enlightenment to Paul.

- (2) PAUL'S TESTIMONY vs. 9-11 (XI. A 14) Paul testifies that his conversion was not like that of the other apostles, who were disciples of

Jesus. His new birth was as sudden as an abortion (v. 8). He who was a *persecutor* of those who believed in the resurrection of Jesus, now becomes a *preacher* of that resurrection. But he can never forget the past (v. 9) even while he remembers God's grace (v. 10a) and its effects in his life. Because of the greatness of God's grace to him (v. 10d), Paul became a more active witness of the resurrection of Christ than any of the other apostles (v. 10c). Yet, they all believed and preached the same thing—the resurrection of the body of Jesus. It is on this fact that the bodily resurrection of believers is based.

DENIED BY THE UNREASONABLE 15:12-19 (XI.
A 15) Now that the Apostle has established the historic fact of Christ's resurrection, he shows how unreasonable it is to believe this fact and deny the resurrection to Christ's disciples. He says: "Now if the rising of Christ from the



dead is the very heart of our message, *how can some of you deny that there is any resurrection?*" (v. 12, Phillips) The resurrection is not a theory separate from the Gospel; it is an integral part of the testimony of the apostles; it is one of two central pillars that support the whole structure of Christian faith. (The other pillar is Christ's death.) If your doubts topple the pillar of resurrection, your faith cannot stand; it will come tumbling down like the Phi-lis'tine Temple of Da'gon, when Samson toppled its middle pillars (Judges 16:29,30).

This fact of the oneness of Christ's and the believer's resurrection is so important that Paul examines it in considerable detail. To show the unreasonableness of the Corinthian doubters' position, Paul temporarily accepts their position for the sake of argument, and lists the consequences that would follow if their contention were true.

1. The Consequences of Denial vs. 13-18 (XI. A 16)
Paul arranges the consequences of denying the resurrection into two sets of four dismal results. He heads each set with the most devastating result: "Neither hath Christ been raised" (vs. 13b, 16b).

a. **FIRST SET vs. 13-15 (XI. A 17)** "If there is no resurrection of the dead" (v. 13a A. R. V.), these things follow:

- (1) **THEN CHRIST IS DEAD.** v. 13b (XI. A 18) If it is impossible for man to be raised from the dead, then the Son of God who became Man to die at Calvary is still dead.
- (2) **THEN GOSPEL PREACHING IS PURPOSELESS.** v. 14b (XI. A 19) If there is no resurrection, then a Gospel based on resurrection is without meaning, literally, to no purpose, without cause, empty ("vain," Gk. *ken-os'*).
- (3) **THEN YOUR PERSONAL FAITH IS WITHOUT FOUNDATION.** v. 14c (XI. A 20) If there is no resurrection and Christ did not rise, then His death has no value for mankind and we have no ground for belief in Him.
- (4) **THEN ALL CHRISTIANS ARE FALSE WITNESSES** v. 15 (XI. A 21) If there is no resurrection,

then every Christian is telling a lie concerning God, because Christians profess to be followers of a living Redeemer, Whom God raised from the dead.

b. **SECOND SET** vs. 16-18 (XI. A 22) "If the dead are not raised" (v. 16a A. R. V.), these things also follow:

- (1) **THEN CHRIST IS DEAD.** v. 16b (XI. A 23) If there is no resurrection, then the God-Is-Dead theologians are correct after all.
- (2) **THEN YOUR PERSONAL FAITH IS FRUITLESS.** v. 17b (XI. A 24) If there is no resurrection, your faith is not only "vain" in the sense of being without cause (*ken-os'*, v. 14), but it is also "vain" in the sense of being "devoid of results" (*mat'ai-os*), just as an idol is unable to produce results. Note how the two different Greek words translated "vain" convey the different ideas of cause and effect. Paul is not repeating what he said in XI. A 19.
- (3) **THEN YOUR SINS ARE UNFORGIVEN.** v. 17c (XI. A 25) If there is no resurrection, then Christ's work is incomplete, and sin, unconquered.
- (4) **THEN ALL THE SAINTS HAVE PERISHED.** v. 18 (XI. A 26) If there is no resurrection, then those who are "in Christ" have been denied the whole purpose of their existence. (The Greek word translated "perished" does not mean extinction, but loss of purpose, and thus, of well-being.)

2. **The Conclusion about Denial** v. 19 (XI. A 27) After carrying the supposition of untruth to its absurd conclusions, Paul states the practical results such a state of affairs would have for Christians: "We should, of all mankind, be the most to be pitied!" (v. 19b, Phillips) The resurrection of Christ, and the resurrection of the believer, are bound together as cause and consequence. If Christ has been raised from the dead, others can be raised. However, the reverse is also true: If we deny that those who are "in Christ" will be raised from

the dead, we also deny that Christ has been raised from the dead. To think differently is unreasonable. The whole structure of Christian faith—the whole Gospel—stands or falls together.

ASSURED BY THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST
15:20-28 (XI. A 28) In this section, Paul builds again the structure of truth temporarily laid aside so that denial of resurrection could be seen in all its irrational absurdity. With a triumphant shout, as arresting as that which will awaken the dead, Paul turns from the Corinthians' doubts to the positive fact of Christ's resurrection:— "*But now IS Christ risen from the dead*" (v. 20a). From this statement of fact, Paul proceeds to the significance of the fact for believers (vs. 20b-27).



1. The Consequences of Resurrection vs. 20b-28b
(XI. A 29). The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ assures the completion of the whole redemptive purpose and plan of God. Paul speaks only of the beginning and the conclusion of Christ's accomplishments on behalf of the believer.

a. THE RISEN CHRIST BEGINS A NEW PROGRAMME.
 vs 20b-26 (XI. A 30) Christ's new programme is characterised by LIFE. Just as all the sons of Adam had been existing under a programme characterised by DEATH, so the new programme for those who are "in Christ" is one of LIFE (vs. 21,22). This glorious programme has three stages (v. 23a). Paul uses a military term that means "order" in the sense of division. Each one who has a part in this new programme, will participate in his own proper division.

(1) FIRST v.23b (XI. A 3¹) Christ Himself is raised from the dead as the "Firstfruits" of this new programme (vs. 20b, 23 b).

As any crop approaches harvest time, some of it will be ready before the main body of the crop is ready for harvesting. The Jewish farmer cut a sheaf of this first-ripened grain, or plucked a sample of the first-ripened fruit, and took these "first fruits" to the Temple at Jerusalem (Num. 18:11-13; Deut. 18:4). On the day after the Sabbath (i. e. Sunday) during the



Feast of Unleavened Bread that was observed together with the Passover, these items were offered to the Lord as a wave offering (Lev. 23: 9-14). This ritual signified that all mankind was steadily moving toward a harvest—a harvest of resurrection. In this human harvest, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Firstfruits. He is all that the Pascal sheaf represented. He rose from the dead on the very day the firstfruits were being offered.

Paul's chief interest however, is not his-



torical or ritualistic; Paul is interested in meanings. As the "firstfruits of them that are asleep" (v. 20, A. R. V.) Christ is the *proof* of bodily resurrection. Just as the "firstfruits" are the earnest, token or first instalment of a harvest, so the risen Christ is *proof* (the advance payment) of the resurrec-

tion of *all* who are dead. He is "the First-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29), "the First-born from the dead" (Col. 1:18), "the First-begotten of the dead" (Rev. 1:5).

Christ's resurrection is also the *pattern* of the *believer's resurrection* (cf. Phil. 3:21). He is a sample of the coming harvest of resurrection, just as the sheaf presented to God was a sample of the grain about to be reaped. If the sheaf was stunted and the grain half-formed, you could expect the harvest to be the same; but, if the sheaf was full-grown with heavy heads of grain, you could expect an equally bountiful harvest. By looking at our resurrected Lord, the Christian can catch a glimpse of the wonder of the resurrection in which he will take part, for "we (Christians) shall be like Him" (I Jn. 3:2c).

In a matter as important as resurrection, the believer wants more assurance than the

possibility, or even the probability, of the event. He wants to be certain. He wants a promise, a *pledge*. Is the risen Christ a *pledge*, as well as a *proof* and a *pattern* of the believer's resurrection? Yes, He is! How? How does one man's rising from the dead give a pledge to others that they too shall rise?

If Christ were an ordinary man, this question would be pertinent. If Christ were an ordinary man, His resurrection would involve no one but Himself. But Christ is *not* an ordinary man. Christ is the God-man, the Saviour of mankind, the Representative Head of the redeemed "order" of believers, the Second Adam. Just as all those associated in the same "order" with the first Adam partake of his sin and its "wages" of death; so, all those associated by faith with Christ, will share in His victory over sin and the resulting resurrection in newness of life. The Christian's life spans "the overlap" (cf. VII. A 14) of the two programmes; He is subject to death; but, he has entered also into the developing programme of resurrection life initiated by the risen Christ (Rom. 6:4). So, the Christian's death is a mere falling "asleep in Christ" (cf. v. 18). Like sleep, death will only last until the dawning of a new day. Christ's resurrection is the *pledge* that the Christian will awake to newness of life. (cf. I Thess 4:14).

- (2) AFTERWARD v. 23c (XI. A 32) The probable date of Christ's resurrection is Sunday, April 9th, A.D. 30. More than 1900 years have gone by since that great event, and they who have died "that are Christ's" are still in their graves. When will Paul's "afterward" take place? Paul does not set a date, but he does tell us *when* believers will be resurrected. He says that those Christians who are dead will rise "at His coming" (v. 23c). The Greek word translated "coming" is *par-ou-si'a*. It means

presence as opposed to absence (Phil. 2:12). We are still living in the period of our Lord's absence, during which time we remember Him by observing the Lord's Supper (cf. VIII. C 9). But He will come back again as He promised (Jn. 14:3; cf. Acts 1:11; Heb. 9:28). When He is again present, His saints will be raised from the dead to be with Him. In the Book of the Revelation, this event is called "the first resurrection" to distinguish it from a subsequent resurrection of "the rest of the dead" (Rev. 20:4-6); "the rest of the dead" cannot be called "Christ's" because they did not believe in Him. From this passage of Scripture, it would seem that believers are resurrected to reign with Christ throughout the Millennium (Christ's earthly reign of one thousand years) before the remainder of mankind are raised from the dead.

- (3) **LAST vs. 24-26 (XI. A 33)** Since Paul is talking about the divisions of the resurrection, he must be referring to the last phase of the resurrection, not to the end of the world. First, he spoke of Christ as the Firstfruits of the resurrection. Then, he spoke of a harvest of believers that has not yet taken place after almost 2000 years. Now, he speaks of a harvest of unbelievers that will take place 1000 years after the harvest of believers. The time between Christ's "coming" and "the end," that is, between the first and second resurrections, will be used by Christ and His saints to perfect the Kingdom. This period ends with the resurrection of "the rest of the dead." It is then that the last enemy—death—will be abolished (v. 26; cf. Rev. 20:14). Death is abolished by the final ingathering of the harvest of resurrection, and by the great judgement that follows (Jude 1:14,15; Rev. 20:12,13).

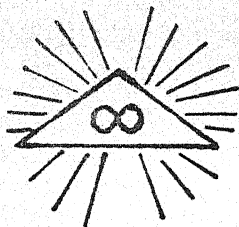


- b. **THE RISEN CHRIST COMPLETES THE KINGDOM PROGRAMME. vs. 27,28b (XI. A 34)** The death of Christ

(Rev. 13:8), the resurrection of Christ (I Peter 1:19-21) and the millennial reign of Christ (Mt. 25:34), are all a part of the redeeming purpose of God from the foundation of the world (Mt. 13:35). When Christ fulfils this divine purpose, by leading believers into face-to-face fellowship with Himself, and by subduing all those who resist His divine will, (Ps. 110:1 quoted in Mk. 12:36; Acts 2:34; Heb. 1:13; 10:13), He turns the Kingdom back to God the Father, Who entrusted it to Him (Lk. 22:29b). This does not mean that Christ ceases to be God, but that He ceases to reign. Acting as the Son of God, He expresses His filial love in free submission to the One Who is His Head (cf. VIII. B 3). Unlike earthly rulers, who never give up their kingdoms willingly, the Lord Jesus Christ will return the Kingdom to God—the same Kingdom He proclaimed while on earth (Mk. 1:14). This same Kingdom is also referred to as Christ's Kingdom (Jn. 18:36; Col. 1:13) because God entrusted it to Him.

2. The Consummation of Resurrection v. 28c (XI. A 35)

The consummation of God's purposes is brought about by Christ through resurrection and in association with His resurrected saints (cf. Eph. 1:10). His redemptive work is finished. Everything and everyone is now in harmony with the holy, Triune God. Christ, the Son, no longer has an assigned task to perform for the Father. Now, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit act unitedly in all things—the Trinity is "all in all."



SUBSTANTIATED BY THE LIVES OF CHRISTIANS
 15:29-34 (XI. A 36) Abruptly, Paul turns from the mysteries of eternity to the miseries of time. The very way Christians live shows that they really believe in a resurrection. If they thought that death ended everything, would they be so concerned about baptism? If they thought that death ended everything, would they live so sacrificially?

1. Why Are They Baptised? v. 29 (XI. A 37) To be baptised in the first century of the Christian era, was to open your-

self to ridicule, suspicion and sometimes the threat of death. Yet, some believers not only were baptised themselves, but submitted to baptism by proxy for relatives who had died without the opportunity of being baptised. Such baptism is without meaning; it cannot benefit the person for whom the believer is baptised. Paul is not endorsing baptism by proxy; he is calling attention only to belief in the resurrection so strong that it made Christians willing to jeopardise their lives. (For the meaning of baptism see CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS, III. C 6.)

2. Why Do They Live Dangerously? vs. 30-34 (XI. A 38)

Paul sets himself forward as an example of those who daily face the possibility of martyrdom because of their witness to the resurrection (vs. 30,31). Would his willingness to undergo brutalities, such as he experienced at Ephesus, be understandable apart from his belief in resurrection? (v. 32a; cf. 4:11-13; II Cor. 4:8-12; 11:23-27; Rom. 8:36) No! A man's belief determines his actions (cf. Phil. 3:10, 11). If he does not believe in a future life, his actions will conform to the popular saying: "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die" (v. 32b; cf. Isa. 22:13). A man's associates also influence his thoughts and eventually his actions. We all learn more by example than by precept. We all run the risk of losing our faith if we constantly associate with cynics, sceptics and doubters. Even the non-Christian Greek dramatist, Me-nan'der, recognises this principle. In his *THA'IS* he states: "Bad company is the ruin of a good character" (prob. quoted here, v. 33, N.E.B.). This is especially true when it is the bad company of a large, pagan city from which one cannot withdraw. Christians should wake up to these facts. They should resist non-Christian influences. They should counteract these non-Christian influences with proper attention to Christian beliefs, such as the bodily resurrection of believers. Yet, some Christians were acting as though they knew nothing of God and His provision for believers (v. 34b). Paul calls attention to this state of affairs in order to shame them (v. 34c).

THE REVEALED NATURE OF RESURRECTION 15:35-58 (XI. B 1)

Paul based his proof of the bodily resurrection of the believer on four arguments: 1) It is a central pillar of the Gospel that changed your lives. 2) It is an essential part of God's

plan of redemption. 3) It is demonstrated and assured by the resurrection of Christ. 4) It is substantiated by the lives of those who believe in the resurrection.

Doubters often raise questions to make their unbelief appear rational. Having proved the fact of resurrection, Paul answers two such questions. By illustrations from nature and quotations from Scripture, he silences the sceptics who thought their questions were unanswerable.

A NEW KIND OF BODY 15:35-49 (XI. B 2) The two questions are closely related: The first, disputes the means of the resurrection: *How* are the dead raised? The second, questions the fashion of the resurrection body: With *what sort of* body are they raised?

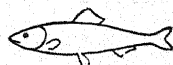
1. The Process of Resurrection vs. 35-41 (XI. B 3) We cannot really understand the process of resurrection any more than we can understand many common processes in nature. Paul does not try to explain the unexplainable. Instead, Paul answers the questioner's implication of impossibility; he shows the reasonableness of resurrection by drawing an analogy: Resurrection is no more impossible than the growth of a seed. How does a seed grow? In four ways that throw light on the process of resurrection:

- a. The seed *must die* before it can spring forth in newness of life (v. 36; cf. Jn. 12: 24).
- b. The new plant comes *from* the seed, but it is *not the same as* the seed (v. 37a).
- c. The *naked grain* is sown, but the glorious harvest is *clothed in foliage* (vs. 37b, 38a).
- d. The seed itself, not its surroundings, determines the nature of the new plant (v. 38b).

These principles are so applicable to the resurrection that Paul does not stop to explain. Instead, he draws further analogies. Already God has created many different types of bodies ac-

cording to the requirements of their function: beasts, so that

they can walk; fish, so that they can swim; birds, so that they can fly (v.39). He has created one kind of body (human) to inhabit the earth, another kind (angelic) to





inhabit the heavens (vs. 40,41). God has even created different stars with different degrees of splendour ("glory," lit. Gk. meaning: manifestation). All creation is a manifestation of His unlimited power and of His predetermined counsel. In this way, the resurrection manifests God's om-nip'o-tence and pre'sci-ence (fore-knowledge).

2. **The Product of Resurrection** vs. 42-49 (XI. B 4)
Now Paul deals with the second question of the sceptics: What is the resurrection body like? In 15:42-44b, he contrasts the present body of the believer with the body he will have after the resurrection, just as he had contrasted the naked seed with the fruit-bearing plant.

a. **THE SAME YET DIFFERENT** vs. 42-44b (XI. B 5)

THE PRESENT BODY

THE RESURRECTION BODY

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (1) <i>corruptible</i> (v. 42b) | (1) <i>incorruptible</i> (v. 42c) |
| (i. e. undergoing decay) | (i. e. not liable to decay) |
| (2) <i>dishonourable</i> (v. 43a) | (2) <i>glorious</i> (v. 43b) |
| (3) <i>weak</i> (v. 43c) | (3) <i>powerful</i> (v. 43d) |
| (4) <i>natural</i> (v. 44a) | (4) <i>spiritual</i> (v. 44b) |

Let us seek to understand the significance of these four contrasts. Yet, at the same time let us note the force of Paul's four-times-repeated statement: "It is sown . . . , it is raised . . ." The very body of the believer will be redeemed in resurrection (Rom. 8:23), yet the redeemed body will not be the same as the unredeemed body. The contrasts between the two bodies are noteworthy.

- (1) **CORRUPTION AND INCORRUPTION** v. 42 (XI. B 6)
From the moment a child is born, he begins to die. This is because he has a corruptible body. Life is a struggle to delay the processes of decay. Failure to maintain the struggle is death. (cf. John 11:39). By contrast, the resurrection body is incorruptible: it will never decay, because life will never be withdrawn from it, as from our physical bodies that are under the curse of sin (cf. Gen. 3:19; Rom. 8:21; Gal. 6:8).
- (2) **DISHONOUR AND GLORY** v. 43 a,b (XI. B 7) By "dishonour" Paul means *lack of honour*, not dis-

grace. Abraham dearly loved his wife, Sarah; but when she died, he bought a cave to bury her body out of his sight (Gen. 23:4). By contrast, the resurrection body will be a body of *glory* that will never need to be hidden. We cannot really appreciate the splendour of the resurrection body, but we know it will be a wonderful contrast to our present body. It will be a body "conformed to the body of Christ's glory" (Phil. 3:21). It will be a body like the resurrection body of Jesus.

- (3) WEAKNESS AND POWER v. 43 c, d (XI. B 8)
Weakness is characteristic of our present bodies (Mk. 14:38; Rom. 8:26). Our resurrection bodies will be characterised by the "power" of the Spirit (cf. 6:14; Mt. 22:29, 30; Phil. 3:10). Note the way these two expressions are compared in II Corinthians 13:4.

- (4) NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL v. 44a, b (XI. B 9) Do you remember what we learned about these two adjectives in LESSON TWO? If not, turn back to II. B 9. The body you now have is subject to the laws and conditions of the soul; it is governed by the soul; it is designed to serve your soul. The resurrection body you will have, will be a spiritual body; it will be controlled by your spirit and empowered by the Spirit of God; it will be designed to serve the spirit. It will not be a "spiritual body" in the sense of being made of spirit (Lk. 24:36-39), but in the sense of being suited to a life "in the Spirit." (There will be no carnal or soulish Christians after the resurrection. cf. Rom. 6:5, 6)

- b. LIKE THE LAST, NOT THE FIRST vs. 44c-59 (XI. B 10)
In verses 44c to 49, Paul carries his instruction a step further by showing from Scripture how the natural body came into existence and how it contrasts with the "spiritual body." The Scripture he uses is Genesis 2:7, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and *man* became a living soul." Paul

then contrasts this first man, Adam, with the Lord Jesus Christ:

THE FIRST MAN: ADAM THE LAST MAN: CHRIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) <i>a living soul</i> (v. 45) | (1) <i>a life-giving spirit</i>
(v. 45c) |
| (2) <i>natural</i> (v. 46a) | (2) <i>spiritual</i> (v. 46b) |
| (3) <i>earthly</i> (v. 47a, 48a) | (3) <i>heavenly</i> (v. 47b, 48b) |
| (4) <i>the image we now bear</i>
(v. 49a) | (4) <i>the image we shall bear</i> (v. 49b) |

Please note that the Lord Jesus is called "the last Adam" (v. 45c). The name Adam is the Hebrew word for man. Adam was not only the first man, but also the first sinless man. Through incarnation, Christ became the last sinless man. Adam was created perfect, but fell into sin; Christ was sinless by nature and resisted all temptation to sin. Thus, we see that each of these men is the first of a kind. Consequently, each one is the head of a group or family of the human race (v. 22; cf. Rom. 5:12-21). They are the two representative men under whom the whole human race is divided. Let us evaluate the great contrasts there are between them.

- (1) LIVING SOUL AND LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT v. 45 b,c (XI. B 11) Adam was a creation of God. God breathed "the breath of lives" (lit. trans.) into him. The whole human race has sprung by natural generation from this one man. On the other hand, the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world by incarnation. Combining Godhood and Manhood in His Person, He gave Himself as a ransom for all those who accept Him, and rose from the dead as the Head of a new race—a spiritual race. He is a life-giving Spirit; He not only is "the life," but has the power to give life to those who believe on Him (Jn. 5: 21, 25-29).
- (2) THE NATURAL AND THE SPIRITUAL v. 46 (XI. B 12) In the sequence of life as in the sequence of history, the divine order is the same: "First," the natural; "afterward," the spiritual. This principle even applied to the earthly life of our

Lord: Before His death on the cross, Jesus had a natural body. After His resurrection, He had a glorified body. But this principle has a wider application: "First," we were unregenerate; "afterward," we received spiritual life by the grace of God.

- (3) **THE EARTHY AND THE HEAVENLY** vs. 47, 48 (XI. B 13) The first man, Adam, was made from the earth (Gen. 2:7; 3:9). The last Man, the Lord Jesus, came from heaven (Jn. 3:13). This is not only a difference in the source of life, but also in the sphere of life. We now have a body suited to this world; we shall have a body suited to heaven. These two adjectives—earthly and heavenly—sum up the differences in the quality of two kinds of life.
- (4) **PRESENT MANIFESTATION AND FUTURE MANIFESTATION** v. 49 (XI. B 14) Also, Paul indicates that there will be a difference in the character of our life. We now bear Adam's image, that is, his nature (Gen. 5:3) and manifestation (Gk., *ei-kon'*) but one day we shall be like Christ (I Jn. 3:2). Both our spiritual bodies and our moral characters will be like our Heavenly Prototype. Christ is the pattern of our resurrection. As we look at the Pattern—the risen Christ—we will begin to understand both the process and the product of the resurrection.

A NEW KIND OF LIFE 15:50-58 (XI. B 15) Paul's description of the resurrection body implies that believers will enjoy a new kind of life in the age to come. Our present bodies of "flesh and blood" (Gal. 1:16) — man as he is—will not be fit for the Kingdom of God (cf. 6:9) to which Christ is Heir (Mk. 12:7ff). If we are to be "joint heirs" with Him (Rom. 8:17), we must be fitted for the heavenly world (v. 50). This need for change applies to the living as well as the dead.

1. A Resplendent Revelation vs. 51-56 (XI. B 16) Beginning with verse fifty-one, Paul introduces a "mystery" (cf. II. B 8 (c))—a truth that had been concealed, which God revealed to the Apostle. Paul was so affected by this revela-

tion (cf. Rom. 11:25f; I Thes. 4:15f; Mt. 24:31) that his prose style changes to poetry. This is more apparent in Way's idiomatic translation:

*We shall all—
Not, sleep in death, but—
In an instant, in the flash of an eye,
At the last trumpet-call
For the trumpet shall sound,
And the dead shall be raised imperishable;
And we, the living, shall be transformed.
For this perishable frame must clothe itself with the
imperishable;
This mortal frame must clothe itself with immortality.
And when this perishable frame hath clad itself with
the imperishable,
When this mortal frame hath clad itself with immor-
tality,
Then shall come to pass the word that stands writ-
ten—
“Death hath been swallowed up in victory!”
“Where, O Death, is thy victory?”
“Where, O Death, is now thy sting?”
His sting is given to death by sin;
Its power to hurt is given to sin by the Law.
But to God be thanks, Who is ever giving us the victory
Through our Lord, Jesus the Messiah!*

The event Paul is describing will take place at the return of Christ. At that time some believers will be dead, but others will be alive. Will it be necessary for the living to die so that they can be resurrected? Certainly not! They need not die, but they “must” be changed (v. 53). Their bodies will be transformed without passing through death (v. 51). This change will be instantaneous (v. 52a). Paul says that it will take no more time than that required for a beam of light to be reflected from the eye.

Paul did not know when Christ would return to begin these changes except to say that it would be “at the last trumpet” (v. 52b). All expositors agree that this is the same trumpet spoken of in I Thessalonians 4:16. However, some believe





it represents the first event in God's future programme, while others regard it as the seventh trumpet of Revelation 11:15,16. This latter view places *the rapture of the saints*—the meeting of resurrected and transformed saints with Christ—after the great tribulation. Since the trumpets of the Book of The Revelation have a symbolic meaning and the trumpet of our text (and I Thes. 4: 16) a more usual meaning, the latter view seems highly improbable.

It is more probable that Paul is alluding to a familiar military practice of the Roman army: At the first trumpet blast, the soldiers would take down their tents and prepare to depart. At the second trumpet blast, they would fall in line with their packs on their backs. At the third and last trumpet blast, they would march away. In the same way, the Christian has already heard the first blast of the Gospel trumpet that aroused him from his settled state in this world. He has also heard and responded to the trumpet call to fall in line in the army of the Lord. Now he is waiting for the last trumpet blast that will end this dispensation of grace, raise dead believers, change living believers and signal him to march into the presence of his Lord.

Whenever it is that the trumpet will be sounded, the following events will take place:

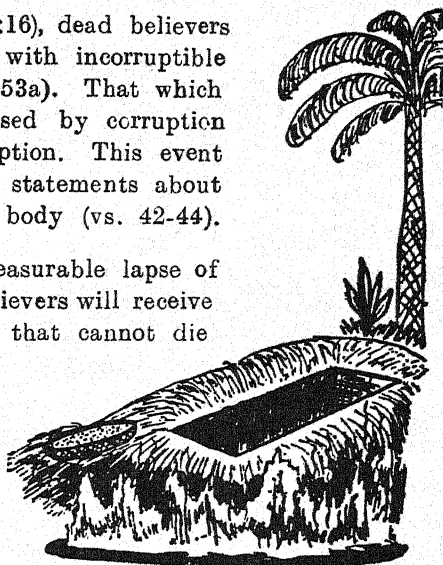
a. First (I Thes. 4:16), dead believers will be raised with incorruptible bodies (vs. 52c, 53a). That which was characterised by corruption inherits incorruption. This event confirms Paul's statements about the resurrection body (vs. 42-44).

b. Without any measurable lapse of time, living believers will receive immortal bodies—bodies that cannot die (vs. 52d, 53b). These bodies will be exactly like the bodies of those raised from the dead.

This double but simultaneous event is in victorious fulfilment of the prophecies of Isaiah (25:8 quoted in v. 54d) and Hosea (13:14 quoted in v. 55). Paul's comments in verse fifty-six are interesting :

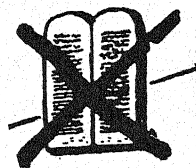
"The sting of death is sin." It is sin that makes death terrible, just as it is the poisonous sting that makes us fear a scorpion. But if the scorpion's sting were removed, we would fear it no longer. Spiritually, this is what Christ has done for us. He has forgiven the believer's sin. While death still retains its outward form, it has lost its power to harm the believer.

"The strength of sin is the law." Just as sin gives death its power to harm, so the law gives sin its power to condemn (Rom. 5:13), for the law shows sin in its true colours. But, for the believer, Christ Himself is the end of the law (Rom. 10:4). For the believer, the restrictions of the law no longer have meaning. Through Christ the believer is delivered from both these hostile powers. Because of His victory over the law and the sin it reveals, those who are in Christ need not gaze apprehen-



sively down the long corridor of time for the approach of the grim reaper; instead, they can look to the triumphant resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore let us offer our thanks to the Lord Jesus, Who has redeemed us from sin and freed us from the curse of the law (cf. Rom. 7: 24, 25; Gal. 3: 13).



2. **A Paean of Praise** v. 57 (XI. B 17) Having placed before his readers such a glorious hope for the future, the Apostle Paul bursts into thanksgiving to God for the share he has granted the believer in the victory of Christ: "Thanks be to God, who *gives* us the victory" (present tense) over sin after sin, through our risen Saviour; and He will continue to do so until our last enemy, death, is conquered. Certainly, this is a gift for which we should give thanks continually!

3. **An Expedient Exhortation** v. 58 (XI. B 18) The Apostle Paul has gone into considerable detail in teaching the Corinthians, and us, about the resurrection. He has given these truths for a spiritual purpose. He expects more than mental assent; he expects his readers to make a practical response. He expects these truths to stir us to the depths of our beings; he expects the result to be consistent, holy living. He expects our knowledge of the resurrection to make us "steadfast," "unmovable," and "abounding."

- a. **STEADFAST** (XI. B 19) The word "steadfast," which Paul uses, literally means *seated*. It conveys the idea of being settled, just as standing conveys the idea of restlessness and change (cf. Ps. 1:1). So far as the fact of Christ's resurrection and its assurance to the believer is concerned, you ought to be thoroughly persuaded in your own mind. In regard to this fundamental doctrine, Christian, please be "seated."
- b. **UNMOVABLE** (XI. B 20) Practical man that he was, the Apostle Paul knew it was one thing to have firm convictions, and quite another thing to keep on holding them against indifference, scorn and opposition. We need not only to be steadfast in our personal faith, we need also to be unmovable, like a mountain, in our day-to-day life, as we mingle with unbelievers in the outside world. (cf. Col. 1:23)

- c. **ABOUNDING (XI. B 21)** Other religions may make concessions to the weaknesses of human nature, but Paul wants every Christian to make this the watchword of his service for Christ: **ALWAYS ABOUNDING.** Our risen Saviour is worthy of our service 365 days a year. Through love and the proper use of the "gifts of the Spirit, we should abound in edifying (i.e. building-up) the church and in making Christ known. Nothing we do or suffer for a risen Christ, Who is coming back to reward those who believe in Him, can be empty or fruitless.

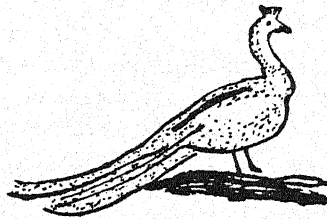
A SUMMARY OF THE LESSON (XI. C 1)

Throughout his epistle to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul has been solving one difficult problem after another. The more difficult the question, the higher Paul rises in answering it. Now as he comes to the climax of the epistle in chapter fifteen, Paul lifts the believer into the very heavens with Christ Jesus. He assures us that the resurrection and the rapture will solve all our problems; he suggests that we live in the reality of these provisions every day of our lives.

At the beginning of chapter fifteen, Paul gives us a four-point outline of the historic basis of the Gospel. These unquestionable facts show the importance, certainty, and results of Christ's resurrection: It is Christ's resurrection that is the proof, pattern and pledge of the believer's resurrection. Paul also answers sceptics who questioned how such radical changes could take place. He illustrates the reasonableness of resurrection, and describes the differences between our present human body and the believer's resurrection body. This resurrection body will be like the body of our risen Lord. The resurrection of the believer, like that of Christ, will be brought about by the power of God. Then Paul reveals that the resurrection will take place when the Lord Jesus Christ returns for His saints (i.e. at the time of the rapture). The saints whose bodies (not their souls) sleep in death will be raised. The saints who are alive will be transformed. The bodies of *all saints* will be changed; *all* will receive immortal, incorruptible bodies like the resurrection body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In view of these future certainties, believers should be unmoved by any problems or troubles this present life may in-

clude. We are not like those who have no hope. We know that our efforts "in the Lord" will be rewarded. Consequently, we should labour without any interruption and without any limitation. Remember: "Christ was raised to life—the First-fruits of the harvest of the dead" (v. 20 N.E.B.). Let us live each day in the expectation of His return. Nothing else can be half so effective in solving both our church problems and our personal problems. "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20c).



In India, we generally think of the peacock as a national symbol and we are correct. Yet the apostolic and post-apostolic church used it as a symbol of the resurrection glory both of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the believer. To the early Christians, the splendour of the peacock spoke of the splendour of the resurrection in which they expected to take part. How helpful it would be if every sight of a peacock reminded us of the resurrection.



Early Christians used also the rooster, which they called "the dawn-riser," as a symbol of the resurrection. Just as the rooster hails the advent of a new day, so the resurrection of believers will signal the advent of a new age.

EXERCISES

1. Paul answers the Corinthian Christians' errors about the resurrection a) by agreeing that it is the soul, not the body, which is raised from the dead. b) by insisting on the bodily resurrection of Jesus as a fundamental fact of the Gospel. c) by reminding them of Sadducean doctrine (Mt. 22:33). d) by denouncing the Greek doctrine of the immortality of the soul. (XI. Intro.)
2. Why does the Old Testament assume the immortality of the soul? a) Because of man's union with an eternal God. b) Because everyone believes it. c) Because Jesus rose from the dead. d) Because Enoch never died. (XI. Intro)
3. What is Paul's first argument concerning resurrection? a) That resurrection of the body is like the sprouting of a seed. b) That it is an integral part of the Gospel and of God's plan of salvation. c) That disbelief is unreasonable. d) That without resurrection, Christians, of all people, are the most to be pitied. (XI. A 2)
4. Which of the following Scriptures is an Old Testament prophecy foretelling Christ's resurrection? a) Isa. 55:1; b) Ps. 16:10b; c) Acts 13:33-37; d) Ps. 2:2. (XI. A 5)
5. What convinced Christ's disciples that He had actually risen from the dead? a) The Scriptures. b) The empty tomb. c) Christ's appearances. d) Christ's teaching about the resurrection. (XI. A 6)
6. The first man to see the Lord Jesus Christ after He rose from the dead was a) Paul. b) James. c) Peter. d) John. (XI. A 7)
7. The largest number of believers to see the risen Christ at any one time was a) one. b) twelve. c) more than 500. d) about 3,000. (XI. A 9)
8. Why does Paul speak of dead believers as "fallen asleep"? a) To indicate that they will rise again. b) To comfort those who are bereaved. c) To confirm the belief that the soul sleeps during death. d) To correct the idea that death is an enemy. (XI. A 9,31)
9. What does Paul mean when he says that he was "born out of due time"? a) That he was not a full-term infant. b) That he was out of harmony with his times. c) That his conversion was as sudden as an abortion. d) That

he regretted he did not know Christ during the days of His flesh. (XI. A 14)

10. According to the Apostle Paul, on what two great historic events is the Gospel based? a) On the Birth and Death of Christ. b) On the Teachings and Miracles of Christ. c) On the Incarnation and Transfiguration of Christ. d) On the Death and Resurrection of Christ.

(XI. A 15)

11. "If there is no resurrection," Paul reasons that it would logically follow that "Christ is dead." According to Paul, it would also follow a) that salvation is by good works in this life. b) that the resurrection of believers is a spiritual resurrection. c) that the Old Testament writers misunderstood the place of our bodies in God's plan and programme. d) that believers are unforgiven and have perished. (XI. A 22-26)

12. The resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the believer are related a) as a chance happening and the hope it brings to others. b) as similar concepts that have been confused in some people's thinking. c) as truth and falsehood. d) as cause and consequence. (XI. A 27)

13. What proved that Christ's death atoned for the sins of mankind? a) His ascension. b) His resurrection. c) His burial. d) His sinlessness. (XI. A 29)

14. What guarantee does the believer have that his salvation will include his body as well as his spirit? a) The resurrected Christ. b) Paul's doctrine of the resurrection. c) The all but universal belief in immortality of the soul. d) Our experience in seeing something much better spring forth from a seed which we sow in the ground.

(XI. A 30; B 7)

15. The believer's body will be raised a) on the judgement day. b) after Christ has subdued all His enemies. c) when Christ returns. d) during the Millennium.

(XI. A 32)

16. How much time lies between the first and second resurrection? a) The time it takes for a beam of light to be reflected from the eye. b) We do not know. c) The time that elapses between One Year of Jubilee and the next, i.e. half a century. d) 1000 years. (XI. A 32, 33)

17. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is a) poverty. b) sickness. c) death. d) the Devil. (XI. A 33)

18. According to the Apostle Paul, if you really disbelieve the doctrine of bodily resurrection, your life philosophy

will tend to be: a) "Live and let live." b) "Bad company is the ruin of a good character." c) "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work . . . in the grave." d) "Eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." (XI. A 38)

19. What is Paul's principal illustration of the nature or process of the resurrection? a) The germination and growth of a seed. b) The difference between Adam and Christ. c) The rebuilding of the destroyed Temple at Jerusalem. d) The ordinance of baptism. (XI. B 3)
20. The very body of the believer will be redeemed by resurrection, yet the redeemed body will not be the same as the unredeemed body; it will be a) invisible. b) angelic. c) incorruptible. d) moral. (XI. B 5-9)
21. What Scripture does Paul use to contrast the "natural" and the "spiritual body"? a) Gen. 2:7; b) Jn. 5:21; c) Rev. 20:1-6; d) Isa. 53:6. (XI. B 10)
22. The last Adam has a characteristic the first Adam never possessed and never will possess. What is it? He is a) living. b) incorruptible. c) heavenly. d) a life-giving spirit. (XI. B 11)
23. To what source can we trace our natural bodies? a) Adam. b) Christ. c) apes. d) one-celled organisms. (XI. B 11)
24. The sting of death is a) separation. b) sorrow. c) sin. d) Satan. (XI. B 16)
25. Rightly understood, Christian doctrine never separates this present life and the future life of the believer. After instructing his readers concerning the bodily resurrection and offering a word of thanks to God on behalf of all those who will have a part in the resurrection, Paul states that the doctrine of the resurrection a) should be committed to memory so that we can recognise the fulfilment of prophecy. b) should make us steadfast in faith, unmovable in Christ-like living and enthusiastic in service for Christ and His church. c) should move us to sell all our possessions, retire from public life and spend all our time looking for Christ's return. d) should make us proud that we are such important people in God's sight. (XI. B 18-21)

1. b; 2. a; 3. b; 4. b; 5. c; 6. c; 7. c; 8. a; 9. c; 10. d; 11. d; 12. d; 13. b; 14. a; 15. c; 16. d; 17. c; 18. d; 19. a; 20. c; 21. a; 22. d; 23. a; 24. c; 25. b.

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Eleven

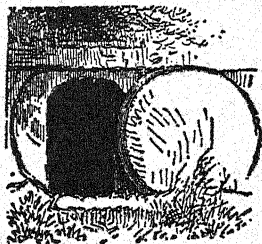
You may use your Bible and text-book in completing this examination. Quote proof texts whenever you can to give substance to your statements. Ten marks will be given for each question correctly and adequately answered. Post your finished examination by first class mail to LIT, Firland Hall, Mussoorie, U. P. , India.

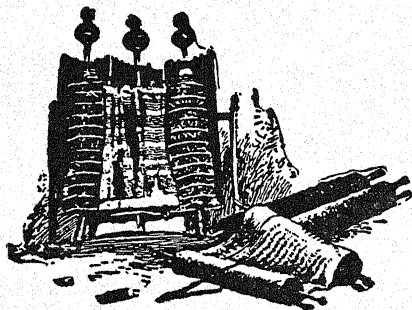
1. Mark each of the following statements either "T" for true or "F" for false:
 - a. Denial of bodily resurrection is also denial of Christ's resurrection.
 - b. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament, immortality of the soul is assumed.
 - c. Death will be destroyed before Christ sets up His Millennial Kingdom.
 - d. The first man came from heaven.
 - e. After death is destroyed, a great change takes place in the essential relationships between the persons of the Trinity.
2. Fully explain the mystery concerning the resurrection that God revealed to the Apostle Paul.
3.
 - a. Name four ways in which the resurrection body is superior to the natural body.
 - b. List four differences between the first and the last Adam.
 - c. Name the two historic facts on which the Gospel is based. How was each of these facts substantiated?
4. Fully explain the believer's relationship to each of the two Adams.
5.
 - a. When was Christ raised from the dead?
 - b. When will believers be raised?
 - c. When will unbelievers be raised?
6. List the different individuals and groups Paul mentions to whom the Lord Jesus appeared after His resurrection. In what way was Christ's appearance to Paul different from His appearances to the others? Do we know of any other appearances besides those Paul mentions?

7. Answer the unbeliever who says: "The resurrection is only a myth."
8. Answer your Muslim friend who says: "Jesus did not really die on the cross; actually, He fainted. The coolness of the tomb revived Him. Later He escaped to Kashmir where He eventually died and was buried."
9. What unusual events will take place when Christ comes again? How should the expectation of these events influence the believer's present life and service?
10. When you recite the Apostles' Creed you say: "I believe in the resurrection of the body . . ." Explain your reasons for this belief.

SUBSTITUTE QUESTIONS

11. The following statement appears in a much used book: "Christ is no longer in a human body." Is this statement true or not? Give Scripture references to support your answer.
12. Show how the believer's hope for this life, and the life to come, rests upon the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.





THE NABLUS ROLL OF THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH, pictured above, is a Hebrew version of the first five books of the Bible, written in columns 13 inches deep, by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, on parchment. It may date from as early as the fourth century B.C. In any case it is older than any of the Jewish (Masoretic) texts of the Old Testament. In spite of its great antiquity, more than two-thirds of the original text can still be read. The characters in which it is written are similar to those on Maccabean coins. Thus they are older than the square characters used in Jewish texts.



**PAUL FINISHING HIS LETTER
TO THE CORINTHIANS**

LESSON TWELVE

THE COLLECTION, THE COLLEAGUES AND THE CONCLUSION

THE COLLECTION 16:1-4

1. **The Immediate Occasion** v. 1
2. **The Permanent Standard** vs. 2-4
 - a. **SYSTEMATIC GIVING** v. 2a
 - b. **PERSONAL GIVING** v. 2b
 - c. **PROPORTIONATE GIVING** v. 2c
3. **The Firm Prohibition** v. 2d
4. **The Proper Administration** vs. 3,4

THE CAMPAIGN 16:5-9

THE COLLEAGUES 16:10-12

1. **Timothy** vs. 10,11
2. **Apollos** v. 12

THE COMMANDS 16:13,14

1. **"Watch"** v. 13a
2. **"Stand Fast in the Faith"** v. 13b
3. **"Be Manly"** v. 13c
4. **"Become Strong"** v. 13d
5. **"Let All . . . Be Done in Love"** v. 14

THE CO-WORKERS 16:15-18

1. **Stephanas and His Household** vs. 15,16
2. **Fortunatus and Achaicus** vs. 17,18

THE CLOSING 16:19-23

1. **The Greetings** vs. 19,20
 - a. **FROM THE CHURCHES IN ASIA** v. 19a
 - b. **FROM THE CHURCH IN AQUILA
AND PRISCILLA'S HOUSE** v. 19b
 - c. **FROM ALL THE BRETHREN** v. 20a
 - d. **FOR THE LOCAL BRETHREN** v. 20b
2. **The Salutation** vs. 21-24
 - a. **THE AUTOGRAPH** v. 21
 - b. **THE WARNING** v. 22a
 - c. **THE PASSWORD** v. 22b
 - d. **THE BENEDICTION** v. 23
 - e. **THE FINAL WORD** v. 24

A SUMMARY OF THE LESSON 16:1-24

With our present lesson, we have arrived at the last chapter of I Corinthians. You will be interested in the practical details of this chapter; so I am sure that I do not need to tell you to read the chapter before proceeding with the lesson material below. What I am going to suggest is that you read this final chapter in the context of the preceding chapter: read all of chapter fifteen *and* chapter sixteen without making a chapter break. By this means, you will see how closely Paul relates the doctrine of the resurrection and our Christian duty to assist the needy.

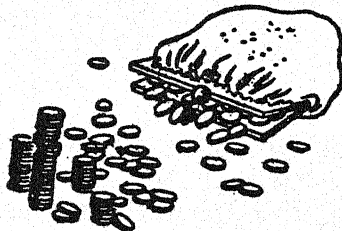
In every chapter of I Corinthians, we have witnessed Paul's God-given ability to analyse and solve church problems. In doing this he has ascended to the very heights of theological thought. Now as we study chapter sixteen, we shall see also that Paul mentions personal matters that no forger would think of including. Paul is *not* an impractical visionary; he is concerned with everyday life; and he is concerned especially that the church be administered properly.

After revealing the glory of the resurrection, Paul abruptly adds: "Now concerning the collection for the saints . . ." One of the practical ways for every Christian to "abound in the work of the Lord" (15:58) is to help supply the material necessities of fellow Christians who are in need.

THE COLLECTION 16:1-4 (XII. A 1) Paul has been answering questions that were sent to him from the Corinthian Church. By using the words "Now concerning . . .," he indicates that he is about to deal with yet another Corinthian question. (cf. 7:1,25; 8:4; 12:1) This question has to do with stewardship. In answering it, Paul gives directions concerning the immediate need, and also establishes permanent principles to guide Christians in their giving.

1. The Immediate Occasion v. 1 (XII. A 2) In obedience to the Apostolic Council held at Jerusalem (Gal. 2:10), Paul formulated a plan for the Gentile churches—the churches made up largely of Christians from a non-Jewish background—to help the needy Christians living in Judæa. (Rom. 15:26). Most of these Christians came from a Jewish background. Christians from these two very different backgrounds tended to split apart. Paul saw an opportunity to bind the two

groups together in Christian love. He was eager that the Gentile churches give visible expression of their concern for their Jewish brothers. So, he suggested "to the churches of Ga-la'tia" (i. e. churches at Pi-sid'i-an An'ti-och, I-co'ni-um, Der'be and Lys'tra) that they take up a free-will offering for the mother-church at Jerusalem. Now, he gives the same "order" to the church at Corinth. (cf. Acts 24:17; Rom. 15:26) All the churches Paul founded (in the four Roman provinces of Asia, Galatia, Achaia and Macedonia) contributed to the gift of money sent to Jerusalem (Acts 20:4).



2. The Permanent Standards vs. 2-4 (XII. A 3) Most Christians recognise the specific directions God gave His Old Testament people concerning giving. The Old Testament Scriptures tell when, where and how much the Israelites should give to God. The Temple tax was a sum that every Jewish adult was compelled to pay (Ex. 30:11ff). Together with the free-will offerings (Lev. 7:16; Num. 15:3) and the tithe (one-tenth of income), each Jew gave two-tenths of his income for the upkeep of the Temple, including the support of the priests and Levites who served in it.

Some Christians suppose that the New Testament leaves Christian giving entirely to the impulses of the individual Christian. This is *not* true. Let us note the principles Paul lays down here (cf. II Cor. 8 & 9) for the believer's giving. He says that our giving ought to be systematic, personal and proportionate.

- a. **SYSTEMATIC GIVING v. 2a (XII. A 4)** Paul suggests that the believer should lay aside an offering every first day of the week as an act of worship. Since he specifies the particular day of the week on which the offering should be made, there must be some special significance to that day. Why did Paul specify "the first day of the week" (i.e. Sunday) as the day on which the Christian should give his offering?

Remember, Paul makes the resurrection (not the law) the motive for Christian giving. Our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on "the first day of the week" (Mk. 16:9). Because of this, members of the Christian church have recognised "the first day" as "the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10). For the Christian, this day has been a special day from the founding of the church on that first Pentecost Sunday (Acts 2:1-47; seventh Sunday after Easter). By His resurrection on the first day of the week, Christ gave that day special significance, and Christians have been remembering and worshipping on that day ever since (Acts 20:7). No committee arranged it; no law commands it; it was as spontaneous as the day of Pentecost. Now, Paul says: Just as regularly as you worship God through prayer and through the reading of His Word, also worship Him by giving an offering. Generally, this offering will be a donation of money--your "labour" in the form of capital. In the light of the resurrection, this "labour" in the form of money will not be "in vain" any more than your "labour" in the form of service (cf. 15:58).



The believer's giving becomes regular as he worships the Lord by laying aside an offering each first day of the week. He gives whether there is any special need or not. He always has money to give because he has separated the Lord's money from his own. His regular giving makes special appeals unnecessary and guards him from impulsive, spur-of-the-moment giving.

Paul does not suggest that a collection be taken at every worship service, although nothing he says forbids this practice. Instead, Paul tells the believer to regularly set aside money for the Lord's work. Thus, he will be "forming a little hoard" (Way) from which he will assist those engaged in the work of the Lord.

- b. **PERSONAL GIVING v. 2b (XII. A 5)** Paul's directives about giving apply to *every* Christian—to "every one of you"—to every member of the Christian church. Of course, everyone would expect the rich to give bountifully; but Paul does not exclude the poor, or the young, or the handicapped. The widow's mite may add very little to the sum total of the offering, but it is a necessary and a required portion of that offering. This is because a Christian's offering is not just rupees and paisa. A Christian's offering is time and thought, and labour and life offered to the Lord for the furtherance of His work. The gift takes its meaning and significance from the giver. Paul commends the churches of Macedonia, who, in spite of "deep poverty," gave liberally. Then Paul explains how such giving takes place: "They . . . first gave their own selves to the Lord" (II Cor. 8:5). True Christian giving will be personal; it will spring from the believer's own personal consecration to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- c. **PROPORTIONATE GIVING v. 2c (XII. A 6)** Since he is no longer under pressure from the law to give as in Old Testament times, every Christian should give generously and spontaneously out of love for Christ. Nowhere does the New Testament specify the amount a Christian should give. Yet, giving prompted by love should exceed giving ordered by law, and Paul does recommend a principle to regulate the believer's giving: He should give a weekly contribution that is a personally-set proportion of his income. The actual amount of his offering should fluctuate according as he "may prosper" (v. 2c). It will be "according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (II Cor. 8:12). This is the kind of "communism" God blesses. (cf. II Cor. 8:13-15) Responsibility is always in proportion to ability.

Now that we have recognised the principle of proportionate giving, what is the proportion of his income a Christian should give?

This question cannot be answered by setting down a simple fraction, such as one-tenth of our income. Yet it can be answered from Scripture. Unlike the Old Testament, the New Testament does *not* name a special day of rest, but makes every day a sacred gift from God to be administered for His glory. In the same way, the New Testament does not order us to give a fixed amount of our money or even a fixed proportion of our income; instead, the New Testament makes us stewards of all God entrusts to us. However, a part of our substance should be consecrated to God's work only. Even by Old Testament standards the minimum portion would be a tenth of our earnings.

Certainly a Christian's free-will offering should not be less. (cf. II Cor. 8:12a)

If love for Christ is the mainspring of our giving, we will give a proportion of our income that is greater than the tithe prescribed for the upkeep of the Temple at Jerusalem.



3. The Firm Prohibition v. 2d (XII. A 7) The Apostle Paul is attempting to steer the church away from a financial programme based upon emotional appeals. If the Lord of the universe is our Heavenly Father, frantic appeals for money are improper. They are only made necessary as Christians do not exercise the "grace" (II Cor. 8:1) of giving. Yet, if financial crises are to be avoided, Christians must practice a proper plan of giving. The welfare of the saints and the evangelisation of the lost depend upon our *paying* as well as our *praying*. Spirituality and liberality go together. Paul's firm prohibition that no collections be made when he comes, will not be difficult to observe if the Corinthians only follow his suggested plan: systematic, personal, proportionate giving. Much of the Lord's work suffers today, because many individual Christians and many entire churches neglect to follow this Biblical pattern of Christian giving.

4. The Proper Administration vs. 3, 4 (XII. A. 8) Paul is also careful to demand that all church funds be administered by worthy believers chosen by the church. Money

given to the Lord must not be wasted; instead, it should be administered conscientiously, economically and in a business-like manner. Moreover, the church is responsible to see that members' gifts are devoted to the purpose for which they were given. Every arrangement should be made to avoid even the possibility of suspicion. All financial matters should be in the hands of more than one individual. Unlike many Christians, who have gotten into trouble by soliciting money for which they could not give a proper account, Paul demanded that appointed representatives assist him in handling the funds of the church. This is a wise procedure for all to follow.



After these few but important words about the collection, Paul gives a brief outline of his future plans, in so far as they involve the Corinthians.

THE CAMPAIGN 16:5-9 (XII. B 1) It is worth noting that the Apostle Paul laid careful plans for the carrying out of the Lord's work. While acknowledging the overruling leadership of God ("If the Lord permit" v. 8c), he planned his work well in advance. At the time he wrote this letter, Paul was planning for and praying about three separate ministries.

While planning for the future, Paul had no intention of running away from present opportunities. He accepted the opportunities he had. "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost" (v. 8). Why? "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me" (v. 9). Paul recognises the providential opening of a place of ministry, and he determines to make the most of the opportunity: he will speak while ears are receptive to his

message; he will enter while the door is open; he will work while it is day.

In India today, the doors of opportunity are wide open. Each believer is standing before his "Ephesus"—his open door. You too must enter before that door closes. You too must work before darkness falls.

"But," you reply, "there are so many disadvantages, so many adversaries."

"Naturally, where there are advantages, there are also disadvantages; where there are opportunities, there are also adversaries."

Please note that the words "*there are*" appears in italics in your Authorised Version. This means that there are no corresponding Greek words in the original text; the translators have added these words to make the sense clearer in the English. Paul actually said that God had granted him two things: opportunities and adversaries. Paul acknowledges *both* the the opportunities *and* the adversaries (15:32; cf. Acts 19:23-41; 24:18-21), but he focuses his attention on the opportunities.

After taking advantage of the opportunities the Lord was giving him at Ephesus, Paul planned to visit Corinth, (cf. 11:34). Instead of coming directly to Corinth, as he had first considered (4:19), he expected to visit the churches of Macedonia (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea) on the way (v. 5). He had decided on this long, circuitous, land route because he wanted to spend more time with the Corinthians than an immediate visit would allow (v. 7). By going to Macedonia first, the Apostle would arrive at Corinth as winter approached (v. 6). Since sea voyages were impossible during the winter in Paul's day, he would remain with them until transportation became available again. This would give opportunity for full Scriptural answers to be given to their many questions.

Evidently Paul actually carried out these plans since Luke records his third missionary journey as leading on from Ephesus to the churches of Macedonia which he had founded (Acts 20:1,2; cf. II Cor. 1:16), then on to Corinth where he remained for three full months (Acts 20.3). It was while he ministered at Corinth that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans. (Read the note following Rom. 16:27.)

Now that Paul has revealed his plans, he speaks also of two colleagues who have a place with him in those plans.

THE COLLEAGUES 16:10-12 (XII. C 1) In the next three verses, the Apostle Paul gives us a good example of Christian ethics (moral principles and duties). He shows us how an older, more experienced Christian worker should act toward younger, less experienced servants of the Lord. He exemplifies the concern and love for the brethren which he had preached to the Corinthians.

1. Timothy vs. 10,11 (XII. C 2) Timothy was probably the youngest of all those closely associated with the Apostle Paul in the work of the Lord. Eight years later the Apostle could still speak of him as young (I Tim. 4:12). Although many think of Timothy as shy and self-conscious, Paul does not accuse him of being timid or of having an inferiority complex. Remembering how critical and outspoken some of the Corinthians could be (cf. II Cor. 10:10), Paul suggests that they should accept this younger substitute as they would have accepted him. Timothy's acceptance should not depend on his



qualifications or experience, but on the fact that he is the Lord's servant (v. 10b). If he is to fulfil his service, he must be permitted to work without fear (v. 10a). It is wrong for any believer to despise a servant of the Lord who is faithful in his service (v. 11).

2. Apollos v. 12 (XII. C 3) It seems that

the church at Corinth had called Apollos to minister to them. The Apostle Paul had agreed and had encouraged Apollos to accept the call. However, Apollos had other ideas: "His will was not at all to come at this time."

Here we have an example of two associate workers with different thoughts concerning the will of the Lord. How is the deadlock resolved? Because of Paul's eminence and experience, and because Paul had been the founder of the church at Corinth, we would expect him to insist that his opinion prevail. But Paul does *not* act like a bishop. He recognises that God speaks to others as well as to himself. Paul permits his colleague to decide the *favourable* time (Gk., eu'kai-ros) for his ministry at Corinth. This is the spirit of humility and unity that strengthens the church and glorifies God.

The words translated "as touching" (v. 12; cf. 8:1) are the very same in the Greek as Paul's often repeated sign of a Corinthian question, "now concerning." Evidently the Corinthians had asked about the coming of Apollos to Corinth and may have questioned whether Paul was preventing his coming. With his reply Paul has answered all their questions. He has completed his instruction and is about to close the letter with greetings and a benediction. Before doing so, he gives five exhortations; the first four are military-like commands; the fifth, an all-embracing principle of conduct.

THE COMMANDS 16:13,14 (XII. D 1) In closing his message Paul speaks several short, penetrating commands that the Corinthians would not soon forget.

1. "Watch" v. 13a (XII. D 2) The first duty of the Christian soldier is to be alert. He must keep a sharp lookout for the enemy and he must watch for the return of his Lord. Paul is simply repeating the command of the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt. 24:42; 25:13; Mk. 13:37) which is given over and over again in other passages of Scripture (Acts 20:31; Col. 4:2; I Thes. 5:6,10; I Peter 5:8; Rev. 16:15). cf. 15:34. Remember, the Christian is always on duty.

2. "Stand Fast in the Faith" v. 13b (XII. D 3) Paul gives this counsel to "stand fast" six different times in his epistles (v. 13; Gal. 5:1; Phil. 1:27; 4:1; I Thes. 3:8; II Thes. 2:15). cf. Eph. 6:11; Col. 4:12 He is anxious that his converts

develop stability. But stability requires two things: an unmoving foundation on which to stand, and strength to stand on that foundation. The unmoving foundation is "the Faith"—belief in Christ Who died and rose again (15:1-4). Strength to stand comes from the risen Christ, for by a continuing act of his will the Christian is "in Christ." The secret of strength is union with Him. (cf. Rom. 5:2).

3. **"Be Manly"** v. 13c (XII. D 4) The Authorised Version translates this command into four words: "Quit you like men." In the original it is one word. It is a verb form derived from the noun for *man*. Paul has taken this command from the Old Testament. There Moses gave this command to "all Israel" (Deut. 31:1) as they were about to enter the land of Canaan (Deut. 31:6,7, 23). Later, God gave the same command to Joshua as Israel prepared to cross the Jordan River (Josh. 1:6,7,9,18). David repeated this same command to himself (Ps. 27:14) and to his son Solomon (I Ch. 22:13). Joab, the captain of David's army, gave this command to his soldiers (II S. 10:12). Now, Paul gives the command to the soldiers of Christ garrisoned at Corinth. Put away your childish carnality. Stand at your post of duty like mature soldiers of the cross. (cf. Ps. 31:24)

4. **"Become Strong"** v. 13d (XII. D 5) The Authorised Version reads: "Be Strong." But, it is a waste of words to tell a weakling to be strong. Paul is actually commanding: "Become strong." He knew from sad experience how very weak the Corinthian Christians were. It is for that very reason that he points to the crucified and risen Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ (chap. 15) and then commands: "Become strong" (chap. 16). Only the risen Christ can give Christians the strength they need to live victoriously (Eph. 3:16). Like the Corinthians, we too may be poor, weak sticks; but, if we permit Christ to permeate our beings, He will strengthen us as calcium-depositing waters permeate and strengthen any piece of wood put into them. Such a stick loses its own wood-like characteristics and becomes as strong as rock. This was the experience of Peter. This was the experience Paul had in mind when he commanded: "Become strong."

5. **"Let All . . . Be Done in Love"** v. 14 A.R.V. (XII. D 6) Paul does not command that our actions should

be in company *with* love, but that they should be enveloped *in an atmosphere* of love. This is Paul's final, all-inclusive command. Do you remember any other principles of conduct Paul proposed? In chapter fourteen he mentioned three principles: 1) "Follow after love" (14:1); 2) "Let all things be done unto edifying" (14:26b); 3) "Let all things be done decently and in order" (14:40). Now, he puts the first and most important principle (which he discussed at length in chap. 13) into the same sentence structure as the other two: "Let all that [you] do be done in love" (v. 14 A.R.V.). Paul wants the very form of his final command to remind us of the other two commands. Let us set them down together so that we will remember:

- a. "Let all things be done unto edifying."
- b. "Let all things be done decently and in order."
- c. "Let all your things be done in love."

These are three principles that should govern our lives; "but the greatest of these is love" (13:13).

THE CO-WORKERS 16:15-18 (XII. E 1) Almost as a postscript, the Apostle Paul adds a few words about the men entrusted by the Corinthians to deliver their letter to him (v. 17).

1. Stephanas and His Household vs. 15,16 (XII. E 2)
The members of the family of Steph'a-nas were among the first converts in Corinth. They were also among the first Christians in the Province of Achaia. Because of this, Paul had baptised them (1:16). They, in turn, were serving their fellow-believers. Such people are true Christian leaders who ought to be recognised and assisted by their fellow-Christians (v. 16). Jesus Himself taught that Christian leadership should be based on Christian service (Mt. 20:25-28). Our great need is for many more Christian households like that of Stephanas that set themselves to minister to their fellow-believers.

We should not proceed without noting the word Paul uses in speaking about the Christian service rendered by the house of Stephanas: "They have *addicted* themselves to the ministry of the saints." An addict is a person who is a slave or devotee to a habit. These days we are hearing about young people who have become addicted to drugs. Paul

speaks of a more worthy addiction—addiction to service. The Greek word translated “addicted” also means “appointed” or “ordained.” There was no official ordination in the early church, but the Holy Spirit did equip individual believers for special ministries to the saints (see LESSON NINE). Thus, a gift of the Spirit is an appointment. The Holy Spirit continues to make such appointments in the church today. Happy the church that recognises addiction to service and confirms it by their own appointment or ordination.

2. **Fortunatus and Achaicus** vs. 17, 18 (XII. E 3) Along with Stephanas, For-tu-na'tus and A-cha'i-cus had brought the letter which Paul was now answering (I. E 5). They were about to carry back Paul's reply—the instructive passages we have been studying. However, they were no mere postmen. The Apostle Paul recognises them as co-workers stationed by the Lord in Corinth. They had ministered to the Apostle even as he had ministered to them. They had been true representatives of the Corinthians, supplying that information and fellowship the Corinthians could not give because of the distance that separated them from Paul (v. 17 b). By their very presence and by their fellowship in the Gospel, they had refreshed Paul spiritually (v. 18a). It is always a spiritual tonic to meet refreshing Christians; such Christians are fitted for spiritual leadership in the church (v. 18b).

THE CLOSING 16:19-23 (XII. F 1). In finishing his letter, Paul sends his personal greetings to the Corinthians as well as the greetings of Christians with whom he is in personal contact. Then he writes the salutation in his own handwriting, adds a warning postscript, pronounces a benediction, and assures them of his love.

1. **The Greetings** vs. 19,20 (XII. F 2) It is customary for Paul to close his letters with a series of greetings from all those acquainted with the Christians to whom he is writing. This letter is no exception.

- a. **FROM THE CHURCHES OF ASIA** v. 19a (XII. F 3) Paul is *not* using the term “Asia” as we would use it today. For Paul, “Asia” was not the continent by that name nor even the geographical sub-division known as Asia Minor. Paul was speaking of the Roman Province of Asia, the political division that

included the western half of Asia Minor. Within this wealthiest area of the Roman Empire where Paul concentrated his efforts, there were Christian churches in each of the principal cities and in many of the places of lesser importance. Later, using John as his scribe, the Lord Jesus dictated letters for seven of these churches in Asia (Rev. 2 & 3). Please note that the word "churches" is plural. Ministering at Ephesus, Paul was in touch with all these local assemblies through his many colleagues and co-workers. In the New Testament sense of the word, a "church" was a group of believers sufficiently localised for its members to assemble in one place for worship. However, these local groups had interests that included the whole Roman Empire and especially Christians who were members of other church groups.

- b. FROM THE CHURCH IN AQUILA'S AND PRISCILLA'S HOUSE v. 19 b,c (XII. F 4) *Pris'ca* is the correct form of the Roman name of which Priscilla is an affectionate diminutive. You will recall that we studied about Aquila and Priscilla in LESSON ONE (I. D 2; I.E. 2,3). This Jewish husband and his wife with a Roman name (Aquila is also a Roman name) followed their trade of tent-making from the remote Roman Province of Pon'tus, by the shore of the Black sea, to Rome. Then, because of the decree of Claudius in A.D. 49 or 50, they were banished from Rome and settled in Corinth where Paul met and lived with them during his first visit to that city (Acts 18:2, 11). When Paul wrote this letter, they were in Ephesus with him (Acts 18:18, 19); later (Rom. 16:3) we learn that they returned to Rome. Yet at the end of Paul's ministry, they evidently were back in Ephesus again (II Tim. 4:19). They were associated with Paul in much of his evangelistic programme (cf. Rom. 16:4a) and they traveled long distances without difficulty. They were a Christian couple who used their home as a witnessing centre wherever they happened to be living. When they were back again in Rome, Paul sent greetings to them and to

"the church that was in their house" (Rom. 16:5a). As Paul writes this letter to the Corinthians, "the church that is in their house" (v. 19c) at Ephesus sent greetings to the church at Corinth, which probably met in the house of one of the Corinthian members. It was not until the third century that Christian writers mention the use of church buildings. If we are to become more apostolic in our witness for Christ, we must add the witness of the Christian home to that of the Christian church. Like Apollos, we must sit at the feet of Aquila and Priscilla and learn "the way of God" more perfectly (Acts 18:26). Then our trade, our travel and our every day life will be consecrated to the exaltation of Jesus Christ as Saviour and to the building of His church.

- c. FROM ALL THE BRETHREN v. 20a (XII. F 5) Not only were the members of the little house-churches bound closely together, but the widely-separated groups also were bound together by a common faith and by common opposition from the world about them. Scattered as they were, they were a true fellowship in which the members knew and loved each other. Their concern for one another was beautiful.
- d. FOR THE LOCAL BRETHREN v. 20b (XII. F 6) The "holy kiss" or "kiss of love" (I Peter 5:14) was a custom of the early church where everyone knew everyone else. It was not given insincerely or promiscuously; it was a sign of Christian love and esteem exchanged by members of the same sex. It was often given on the hand or the cheek rather than the lips. It was generally given as the congregation prepared for the Lord's Supper, and thus came to be called "The Peace" (or *The Pax*). This ceremonial embrace is still practised by some Anglicans, Catholics, Dunkards and Nestorians. (cf. Rom. 16:16; II Cor. 13:12)

Paul recommends this custom as a means of counteracting the strife and dissension at Corinth. This "holy kiss" was a pledge of faithfulness, a con-



secession of friendship and a reminder of brotherhood. It was solemn; it was sacred; it was a means of purging hypocrisy from the Christian fellowship. It was a salutation between equals, a salutation between believers, a salutation given without regard to personal wealth or social position. It was an expression

of love that was the very opposite of the jealousy displayed by the cliques within the Corinthian church.

2. The Salutation vs. 21-24 (XII. F 7) Following the practice of busy men of all ages, the Apostle Paul generally dictated his letters to a secretary. For example, the Epistle to the Romans was dictated to Ter'tius (Rom. 16:22). To prove the genuineness of his letters and to add a personal touch, Paul closed each letter with a salutation he wrote with his own hand, just as business men today sign the letters they have dictated to their secretaries (Col. 4: 18; II Thes. 3:17 and Gal. 6:11 which should be translated: "I am writing.").

- a. **THE AUTOGRAPH** v. 21 (XII. F 8) Paul has picked up the pen of his secretary and is writing in letters the Corinthians will recognise. Later, they will cherish this epistle for the autographed portion as well as for its instruction.
- b. **THE WARNING** v. 22a (XII. F 9) Paul feels that he must add a final word of warning: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *accursed*" (cf. IX. A 3). What a solemn pronouncement! And yet, by this solemn warning the Apostle Paul brings each reader face-to-face with this question: Do I love the Lord Jesus Christ? Remember, Paul is *not* writing to blasphemers or to infidels;

Paul is writing to church members—to those who profess to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ's disciples prove their love for Him by their actions: by obedience (Jn. 14:15; 15:14); by their delight in His Word (Ps. 19:8; Ps. 122:1); by their forsaking of other allegiances (Jn. 15:19; 16:24; II Cor. 6:17, 18); by their enthusiasm for the honour and glory of Christ (Gal. 6:14 Phil. 3:8); and by their longing for His return (Heb. 9:28; Rev. 22:20c). Can I say that I love Him as a Friend? Paul is not using the word for God-like love that he used in chapter thirteen. He is using the word Peter used in replying to this question of Jesus: "Lovest thou Me?" Can we answer as Peter did? "Lord, Thou knowest that I *love* Thee." (Read Jn. 21:15-17.)

- c. THE PASSWORD v. 22b (XII. F 10) Paul had been dictating and is now writing in the Greek language. Without warning he inserts a phrase in Ar-a-ma'ic, the language spoken by Jesus and most people in the Middle East during late Old Testament, Inter-Testament and New Testament times. The Aramaic phrase is two words which our translators have not translated. They are "*Mar'an a'tha*." The word "*mar*" means *lord*, and is found in Daniel 2:47 and elsewhere in this Old Testament book that is written in Aramaic. The female name, Martha, is its feminine form and means *lady*. The word "*tha*" means *come* and is found in Daniel 7:22 where it refers to the Second Coming. Thus, the whole phrase probably means: "The Lord cometh," or "May the Lord come." But why would Paul write these Aramaic words to a Greek-speaking church? Is he violating his own principle of using words that communicate meaning? I think not! Paul is using a password or watchword that certainly had its origin in Palestine, but which must have spread throughout the whole church. He is using it in its original, untranslated form, because his readers will understand it in that form, because it will be more forceful in that form, and because it sums up the very real hope of all Christians, everywhere. The concept,

like the phrase, would not be understood by non-Christians. Yet, this humble phrase identifies one believer to another and enables them to share their common faith through the expression of their common hope: "May the Lord come."

- d. **THE BENEDICTION** v. 23 (XII. F 11) As in all the salutations he writes, Paul invokes God's "grace," that is, His unmerited favour, upon his readers. This is the free gift of God that will sustain the Christian through all the circumstance of his life. By these few written words, Paul extends his hand of blessing all the way from Ephesus to Corinth, and



GIVING THE PASSWORD

all the way from the first century to the twentieth century in which we live: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with *you*" (v. 23).

e. THE FINAL WORD v. 24 (XII. F 12) One would suppose that Paul's letter would end with his benediction; but it does not. Like many another concerned preacher, Paul must add a final word—a final reminder of his own love. He has criticised; he has corrected; he has warned; he has shamed; and he has even threatened. Yet, he has done it all because of his love for his readers. His concern is a demonstration of love that "never faileth" (13:8). It is a love that "suffereth long, and is kind" (13:4) even to the most delinquent Christian. It is a love that has its source "in Christ Jesus" (16:24). Thus, Paul closes his epistle by invoking "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" and by reassuring his readers concerning his God-given love for them. After that the Apostle can write: "Amen."

A SUMMARY OF THE LESSON (XII. G 1)

In the sixteenth chapter of I Corinthians Paul deals briefly with several subjects. He begins by giving directions to collect money for the poor Christians of Judaea. This brief instruction is so basic that, with II Corinthians 8 and 9, it sets forth principles that regulate Christian giving for all time. Then Paul reveals his plans for the immediate future. In doing so, he reveals how thoroughly he plans his work and how completely he depends upon God to direct him. He follows this with a few words about his colleagues, Timothy and Apollos. Then, in a brief series of military-like commands, he gives basic principles that should govern our everyday life. After that he speaks briefly about some of the Christians from Corinth. Then he closes the epistle with greetings from the churches of the province, from his associates, and from himself, together with a salutation in his own handwriting that not only included his autograph, but also a warning, a password, a benediction and a final word of affection.

We have come to the end of Paul's interesting letter. Paul has finished his task, but our task is just beginning. We

must live the instruction he has given. Here are a few suggestions.

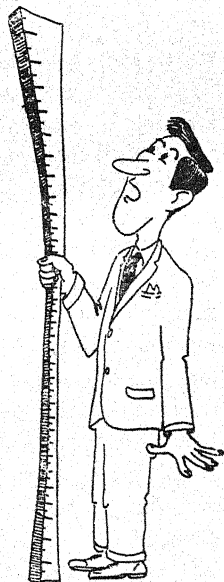
1. The best way to learn is to teach. Why not give a series of studies from this epistle? Since the course has been a blessing to you, share your blessing with others. There are many believers who need the instruction you have received.

2. Seek to apply the lessons you have learned to your own life. This will demand considerable thought and effort. It should lead to growth in love as well as growth in knowledge. As our love of God increases, our love for the brethren will also increase.

3. Seek to apply the teaching of I Corinthians to the problems that arise in your local church. Where the same problems exist, the same remedies will be effective. Where Biblical solutions are applied, problems will disappear.

4. Continue to read and study I Corinthians. You may have completed the requirements of this course, but you have not learned all the lessons God has in store for you from this practical portion of His Word. Relate other portions of Scripture to this portion that has become familiar. Keep on studying; and ask God to help you by His Holy Spirit to learn more and more concerning His will.

We have learned Paul's divinely inspired answers to church problems that were quenching the spiritual life of the Corinthian church. Many of the same problems are hindering our churches from serving Christ in the fullest measure. Yet church problems are the combined problems of individual Christians who make up the church membership. While being concerned enough about our church problems to make them a constant matter of prayer, study and action, let us not neglect to ask ourselves this question: Do I measure up to the standard set for Christians in the **FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS?**



How do you measure up?

EXERCISES

Circle the "a," "b," "c" or "d" before the correct answer in each of the following multiple-choice questions. Then check your answers with the correct ones at the bottom of the page. Do NOT send these exercises to the LIT office.

1. The most immediate and practical way for all Christians to "abound in the work of the Lord" is a) to go on a preaching mission; b) to give money to provide the basic requirements of needy saints; c) to teach a Sunday School class; d) to withdraw from the world and practise meditation. (XII. Intro.).
2. The first question of the Corinthians Paul answers in chapter sixteen is about a) stewardship. b) the resurrection. c) the rapture. d) his proposed visit to Corinth. (XII. A 1)
3. The churches of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Derbe and Lystra were all located in the Roman Province of a) Macedonia. b) Achaia. c) Galatia. d) Asia. (XII. A 2)
4. The tithe is a) three-tenths; b) two-tenths; c) one-tenth; d) half; of an individual's income. (XII. A 3)
5. In order to make giving systematic, Paul suggests a) that a tithe be deducted by the believer's employer; b) that the believer set aside ten percent of each salary payment; c) that collections be made at each worship service; d) that the believer set aside each Sunday a proportionate amount of his weekly income. (XII. A 4)
6. For the Christian, Sunday has special significance a) because Constantine declared it the official day for Christian worship. b) because they want to be different from Muslims and Jews, who observe Friday and Saturday, respectively. c) because Christ rose from the dead on that day. d) because the New Covenant prescribes it as a day of rest. (XII. A 4)
7. Paul's directives about giving apply a) to the Corinthians only. b) to the rich only. c) to ministers and Christian workers only. d) to every believer. (XII. A 5)
8. Church funds should be handled a) by several believers selected by the church. b) by the minister only. c) by the appointed representative of the pastor. d) by any believer who wishes to take up a collection. (XII. A 7)
9. Paul firmly prohibits the Corinthians a) from taking up a collection during his ministry among them. b) from holding church suppers. c) from soliciting church funds

from non-Christians. d) from borrowing money for the construction of a church building. (XII. A 8)

10. What is the reason for italicising words in the Authorised Version of the Bible? a) To emphasise them. b) To show that they are not part of the Greek text. c) To relieve the monotony of the page. d) To show that they have been omitted in some translations. (XII. B 1)
11. Ethics is a study of a) human tools, records and remains from the past. b) moral principles and duties. c) the characteristics and customs of various races of people. d) that which distinguishes one religious group from another. (XII. C 1)
12. What is Paul's relationship to other Christian workers? a) He acts as their bishop, deciding where and when they should minister. b) He recognises that God speaks to all His servants and permits each one to make his own decision when and where he will minister. c) He insists that others act as his assistants. d) He permits others to serve except in the churches he founded. (XII. C 3)
13. The first duty of the Christian soldier is a) to be alert. b) to give to the Lord's work. c) to provide for his own household. d) to search out and challenge the enemy. (XII. D 2)
14. Who said: "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch"? a) Paul. b) Aquila. c) Tertius. d) Jesus. (XII. D A)
15. What command in I Corinthians 16 does Paul repeat five times in his other epistles? a) Let all be done in love. b) Become strong. c) Stand Fast. d) Only believe. XII. D 3)
16. Who taught that Christian leadership should be based on Christian service? a) Jesus. b) Peter. c) Paul. d) Stephanas. (XII. E 2)
17. To which of the following individuals does Paul make reference as having refreshed him spiritually? a) Fortunatus, Achaicus and Stephanas. b) Aquila, Priscilla and Phoebe. c) Apollos, Timothy and Titus. d) Ep-aenet-us, Andronicus, and Junia. (XII. E 3)
18. "The Peace" which was a custom practised in the early church was a) an unwritten understanding between the Jewish and Gentile factions within the church. b) a pledge to nonviolence. c) a kiss of greeting exchanged by believers of the same sex. d) a special benediction pronounced at the close of the Holy Communion service. (XII. F 6)

19. *Maran atha* is an Aramaic phrase which means a) Jesus is accursed. b) May the Lord come. c) Worship the Virgin Mary. d) Hail to St. Maro. (XII. F 10)
20. What is Paul's final word to the Corinthians? a) A greeting from the church at Ephesus. b) An exhortation to seek after wisdom. c) A reminder that some Christians had not been baptised. d) An expression of his own love for them. (XII. F 12)



PAUL SIGNING LETTER

1. b; 2. a; 3. c; 4. c; 5. d; 6. c; 7. d; 8. a; 9. a; 10. b; 11. b;
12. b; 13. a; 14. d; 15. c; 16. a; 17. a; 18. c; 19. b; 20. d.

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Twelve

1. What principles of Christian giving are taught in I Corinthians 16? List and explain them.
2. List the five exhortations or commands Paul gives the Corinthians near the close of his letter. Give a commentary on any one of the first four.
3.
 - a. Write out two exhortations Paul gave previously which remind us of the fifth exhortation in chapter sixteen.
 - b. Which chapter of the epistle is a commentary on the fifth exhortation of I Corinthians 16?
4. Explain the following expressions as fully as you can: a) Anathema; b) Maranatha. What is their spiritual significance as Paul uses them in chapter sixteen?
5. In what ways were the households of Stephanas and Aquila and Pricilla good examples to us?
6. Write a short biography of either Timothy or Apollos. Include the name of his native place; the time, place and circumstances of his conversion; his characteristics; the extent of his ministry; and his connection with the Apostle Paul. (All this information has not been given in this lesson.)
7. Fill in the blank spaces below:
 - a. Paul planned to stay in until; then he expected to make a missionary tour through and spend the winter at.....
 - b. Ephesus was the chief city in the Roman Province of
 - c. The names of the three men who brought the letter of the Corinthian church to Paul were....., and
8. Paul's love for his fellow-Christians shows forth in many ways in this final chapter of his epistle. List these evidences of his love and comment on each.
9. Answer the Christian who says: "I do not tithe and I do not keep the Lord's money separate from my own. I consider that all my money really belongs to the Lord. I'm sure I give as much as most Christians, but I do not keep an account of what I give."
10. In your own giving to the Lord, do you follow the principles set down in I Corinthians 16? Explain why you do or do not.

LESSON THIRTEEN

REVIEW, APPLICATION & FURTHER STUDY



Review

When you eat a chapatti you tear it into portions small enough to place in your mouth. However, when you think about that chapatti, you do not think about the pieces, but about the whole chapatti. In a similar way, we have torn I Corinthians into twelve parts, or lessons, in order to partake of them mentally. This was the proper thing to do, for we could not have managed I Corinthians in one tremendous intellectual bite. Instead, we divided it into portions we could handle. However efficiently and logically we may have divided Paul's message (and everyone studying the epistle will divide it to suit his own purposes), it still remains one complete epistle—an entity in itself. By way of review, let's put the various parts of the letter back together again; let's study it briefly in its entirety. Perhaps the quickest way to do this is to reconsider our outline of the whole epistle. As you do this, try to recall the teaching given under each heading. If you cannot remember, turn back to the section indicated in brackets. Also note the relationships of the various subjects and the sweep of Paul's message. Revise I Corinthians with a view to nailing down the facts in your mind for all time.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EPISTLE 1:1-9 (II. A 1)

GREETINGS 1:1-3 (II. A 2)

- 1. The Author (II. A 3)**
- 2. The Author's Title (II. A 4)**
- 3. The Compound Name (II. A 5)**
- 4. The Co-Worker (II. A 6)**
- 5. The Addressee (II. A 7)**
- 6. The Addressee's Designation (II. A 8)**
- 7. The Included (II. A 9)**
- 8. The Benediction (II. A 10)**

THANKSGIVING 1:4-9 (II A 11)

- 1. For Past Gifts (II. A 12)**
- 2. For Present Gifts (II. A 13)**
- 3. For Future Gifts (II. A 14)**

COMMENTS ON CONDITIONS IN CORINTH 1:10-6:20

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CAUSE 1:10-3:4 (II. B 1)

- 1. The Appeal for Unity 1:10 (II. B 2)**
- 2. The Cause of Disunity 1:11-13 (II. B 4)**
- 3. The Reference to Baptism 1:14-17 (II. B 5)**
- 4. The Subject Matter of Preaching 1:18-25 (II. B. 6)**
- 5. The Display Through the Church 1:26-31 (II. B 7)**
- 6. Denunciation of Mere Eloquence 2: 1- 5 (II. B 8)**
- 7. The Wisdom of God 2: 6-13 (II. B 9)**
- 8. The Classes of Mankind 2:14-3:4 (II. B 10)**

a. SPIRITUAL

b. SOULISH

c. BODILY

PARTY STRIFE: ITS CURE 3:5-4:21 (III. A 1)

- 1. A Time for Work 3:5-12 (III. A 2)**
 - a. GOD'S FELLOW-WORKERS (III. A 3)
 - b. GOD'S GARDEN (III. A 4)
 - c. GOD'S BUILDING (III A 5)
 - d. GOD'S PIONEERS (III. A 6)
 - e. GOD'S FOLLOW-UP MEN (III. A 7)
- 2. A Time of Testing 3:13-15 (III. B 1)**
 - a. REWARDED WORK (III. B. 2)
 - b. REJECTED WORK (III. B 3)

3. **A Time of Judgement** 3:16,17 (III. C 1)
4. **A Time for Reappraisal** 3:18-23 (III. D 1)
 - a. **MINISTERS** (III. D 2)
 - b. **THE WORLD** (III. D 3)
 - c. **LIFE AND DEATH** (III. D 4)
 - d. **THINGS PRESENT AND THINGS TO COME** (III. D 5)
 - e. **ALL THINGS** (III. D 6)

(1) All things belong to the Christian.

(2) The Christian belongs to Christ.

(3) Christ belongs to God.

5. **A Time for Right Thinking** 4:1-5 (III. E 1)
 - a. **SERVANTS OF CHRIST** (III. E 2)
 - b. **STEWARDS OF THE MYSTERIES OF GOD** (III. E 3)
6. **A Time for Fatherly Advice** 4: 6-21 (III. F 1)
 - a. **ABOUT SPIRITUAL PRIDE** 4: 6, 7 (III. F 2)
 - b. **ABOUT SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENT** 4: 8-13 (III. F 3)
 - c. **ABOUT SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD** 4:14-21 (III. F 4)

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE 5: 1-13 (IV. A 1)

1. **Excommunication of the Immoral** 5: 1- 5 (IV. A 2)
2. **Cleansing of the Church** 5: 6- 8 (IV. A 3)
3. **Separation from Offenders** 5: 9-13 (IV. A 4)
 - a. **FORNICATORS** (IV. A 5)
 - b. **COVETOUS PEOPLE** (IV. A 6)
 - c. **IDOLATERS** (IV. A 7)
 - d. **REVILERS** (IV. A 8)
 - e. **DRUNKARDS** (IV. A 9)
 - f. **EXTORTIONERS** (IV. A 10)

CHRISTIAN LITIGATION 6: 1- 8 (IV. B 1)

1. **Overlooks the Destiny of Saints** 6: 2, 3 (IV. B 2)
2. **Overlooks the Abilities of Saints** 6: 4- 6 (IV. B 3)
3. **Overlooks the Spirit of Saints** 6: 7, 8 (IV. B 4)

CHRISTIAN ETHICS 6: 9-20 (IV. C 1)

1. **Moral Change** 6: 9-11 (IV. C 2)
2. **Moral Fitness** 6:12 (IV. C 3)
3. **Moral Purity** 6:13-20 (IV. C 4)

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FROM CORINTH 7:1-16:12**MARRIAGE OR CELIBACY 7:1-9 (V. A 1)**

- 1. The Advantages of Celibacy 7:1,7 (V. A 2)**
- 2. The Responsibilities of Marriage 7:2-6 (V. A 3)**
- 3. The Honourable Choice for Christians 7:8,9 (V. A 4)**

MARRIAGE OR DIVORCE 7:10-24 (V. B 1)

- 1. The Rule 7:10,11 (V. B 2)**
- 2. The Exception 7:12-15 (V. B 3)**
- 3. The Reason 7:16 (V. B 4)**
- 4. The Principle 7:17,20,24 (V. B 5)**
- 5. The Illustrations 7:18,19,21-23 (V. B 6)**
 - a. THE CIRCUMCISED vs. 18,19 (V. B 7)**
 - b. THE ENSLAVED vs. 21-23 (V. B 8)**

MARRIAGE OR SERVICE 7:25-28 (V. C 1)

- 1. The Reply 7:25,35-38 (V. C 2)**
- 2. The Reasons 7:26-34 (V. C 3)**
 - a. THE IMPENDING DISTRESS vs. 26-28 (V. C 4)**
 - b. THE SHORTNESS OF TIME vs. 29-31 (V. C 4)**
 - c. THE CARES OF MARRIAGE vs. 32-34 (V. C 6)**

MARRIAGE OR DISOBEDIENCE 7:39,40 (V. D 1)**FOOD SACRIFICED TO IDOLS 8:1-13 (VI. A 1)**

- 1. Motivation of Conduct 8:1-8,13 (VI. A 2)**
 - a. PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE 8:1,2,4-8 (VI. A 3)**
 - b. BROTHERLY LOVE 8:1,3,13 (VI. A 4)**

2. Inviolability of Conscience 8:9-12 (VI. A 5)

- a. A HARD COMMAND v. 9 (VI. A 6)**
- b. A HYPOTHETICAL QUESTION vs. 10,11 (VI. A 7)**
- c. A HARROWING THOUGHT v. 12 (VI. A 8)**
- d. A HIGH-MINDED RESOLUTION v. 13 (VI. A 9)**

RIGHTS SACRIFICED FOR CHRIST 9:1-27 (VI. B 1)**1. Seventeen Rhetorical Questions 9:1-18 (VI. B 2)**

- a. AM I NOT FREE? v. 1b (VI. B 3)**
- b. AM I NOT AN APOSTLE? v. 1a (VI. B 4)**

- c. HAVE I NOT SEEN JESUS OUR LORD? v. 1c (VI. B 5)
- d. ARE YE NOT MY WORK IN THE LORD? v. 1d (VI. B 6)
- e. HAVE WE NO RIGHT TO EAT AND TO DRINK? v. 4 (VI. B 7)
- f. HAVE WE NO RIGHT TO LEAD ABOUT A WIFE? v. 5 (VI. B 8)
- g. HAVE WE NOT A RIGHT TO FORBEAR WORKING? v. 6 (VI. B 9)
- h. WHAT SOLDIER EVER SERVES AT HIS OWN CHARGES? v. 7a (VI. B 10)
- i. WHO PLANTETH A VINEYARD AND EATETH NOT THE FRUIT THEREOF? v. 7b (VI. B 11)
- j. WHO FEEDETH A FLOCK AND EATETH NOT THE MILK? v. 7c (VI. B 12)
- k. DO I SPEAK THESE THINGS AFTER THE MANNER OF MEN? v. 8a (VI. B 13)
- l. SAITH NOT THE LAW ALSO THE SAME THINGS? v. 8b (VI. B 14)
- m. IS IT FOR OXEN THAT GOD CARETH? v. 9c (VI. B 15)
- n. SAITH HE IT ASSUREDLY FOR OUR SAKE? v. 10a (VI. B 16)
- o. IS IT A GREAT MATTER IF WE REAP YOUR CARNAL THINGS? v. 11 (VI. B 17)
- p. IF OTHERS PARTAKE OF THIS RIGHT OVER YOU, DO NOT WE YET MORE? v. 12 (VI. B 18)
- q. KNOW YE NOT THAT THEY THAT MINISTER . . . EAT OF THE THINGS OF THE TEMPLE? v. 13 (VI. B 19)
- 2. One All-Embracing Principle** 9:19-23 (VI. B 20)
- 3. Two Athletic Illustrations** 9:24-27 (VI. B 21)
 - a. THE RUNNER THE PRIZE vs. 24-26a (VI. B 22)
 - b. THE BOXER DISQUALIFICATION vs. 26b,27 (VI. B 23)

A LESSON FROM HISTORY	10:1-13	(VII. A 1)
1. Historic Facts	10:1-10	(VII. A 2)
a. UNIVERSAL PROVISION	10:1- 4	(VII. A 3)
(1) THE CLOUD	v. 1a	(VII. A 4)
(a) Guidance		
(b) Protection		
(c) Concealment		
(2) THE SEA	v. 1b	(VII. A 5)
(a) Israel's Miraculous Crossing		
(b) Egypt's Utter Defeat		
(c) Israel's Song of Deliverance		
(3) BAPTISM UNTO MOSES	v. 2	(VII. A 6)
(4) SPIRITUAL FOOD	v. 3	(VII. A 7)
(5) SPIRITUAL DRINK	v. 4	(VII. A 8)
b. MAJORITY FAILURE	10:5-10	(VII. A 9)
(1) BECAUSE OF IDOLATRY	v. 7	(VII. A 10)
(2) BECAUSE OF IMMORALITY	v. 8	(VII. A 11)
(3) BECAUSE OF PRESUMPTION	v. 9	(VII. A 12)
(4) BECAUSE OF MURMURING	v. 10	(VII. A 13)
2. Spiritual Lessons	10:11-13	(VII. A 14)
a. SELF-CONFIDENCE LEADS		
TO FAILURE	10:12	(VII. A 15)
b. GOD PERMITS TEMPTATION	10:13	(VII. A 16)
c. GOD PROPORTIONS TEMPTATION	10:13	(VII. A 17)
d. GOD PROVIDES ESCAPE FROM		
TEMPTATION	10:13	(VII. A 18)

A LESSON FROM THE LORD'S SUPPER

	10:14-22	(VII. B 1)
1. Significance of the Lord's Supper	10:16-18	(VII. B 2)
2. Significance of Pagan Feasts	10:19,20	(VII. B 3)
3. Consecration of Christ's Disciples	10:21,22	(VII. B 4)

A SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES AND DIRECTIVES

	10:23-11:1	(VII. C 1)
1. Seven Principles	10:23,24,31-11:1	(VII. C 2)
a. IS MY CONDUCT SUITABLE TO		
THE OCCASION?	10:23a	(VII. C 3)

- b. WILL MY CONDUCT EDIFY? (i. e. build up)
OTHER CHRISTIANS? 10:23b (VII. C 4; cf. VI. A 7)
- c. IS MY CONDUCT UNSELFISH? 10:24 (VII. C 5)
- d. IS MY CONDUCT GLORIFYING
TO GOD? 10:31 (VII. C 6)
- e. IS MY CONDUCT OFFENSIVE TO
ANY CLASS OF PEOPLE? 10:32 (VII. C 7)
- f. IS MY CONDUCT LEADING MEN
TO CHRIST? 10:33 (VII. C 8)
- g. IS MY CONDUCT AN IMITATION
OF CHRIST? 11:1 (VII. C 9)
- 2. Two Directives 10:25-30 (VII. C 10)
 - a. FOOD FOR HOME USE 10:25,26 (VII. C 11)
 - b. FOOD SERVED IN THE HOME
OF A NON-CHRISTIAN 10:27-30 (VII. C 12)

NECESSITY OF MODESTY 11: 2-16 (VIII. B 1)

- 1. Divine Principle 11: 3 (VIII. B 2)
 - a. GOD IS THE HEAD OF CHRIST v. 3c (VIII. B 3)
 - b. CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF MAN v. 3a (VIII. B 4)
 - c. MAN IS HEAD OF WOMAN v. 3b (VIII. B 5)
- 2. Scriptural References 11:7-12 (VIII. B 6)
- 3. Instinctive Feelings 11:13 (VIII. B 7)
- 4. Teaching of Nature 11:14,15 (VIII. B 8)
- 5. Church Custom 11:16 (VIII. B 9)

NECESSITY OF ORDERLINESS AND REVERENCE

- 11:17-34 (VIII. C 1)
- 1. Misuse of the Feast 11:20-22 (VIII. C 2)
- 2. Institution of the Feast 11:23-26 (VIII. C 3)
 - a. WHO? (VIII. C 4)
 - b. WHEN? (VIII. C 5)
 - c. HOW? (VIII. C 6)
 - (1) He "took bread."
 - (2) He gave thanks.
 - (3) He broke the bread.
 - (4) He took the cup.

- d. WHAT did Jesus teach? (VIII. C 7)
- (1) THAT the bread represents His body.
 - (a) Transubstantiation
 - (b) Consubstantiation
 - (c) The Real Presence
 - (2) THAT His body was about to be given as a sacrifice for sin.
 - (3) THAT the cup represents His blood.
 - (4) THAT His blood is the seal of His new covenant.
- e. WHY did Jesus institute the feast? (VIII. C 8)
- (1) AS A MEMORIAL
 - (2) AS A PROCLAMATION
- f. How LONG are we to keep the feast? (VIII. C 9)

3. Insight into the Meaning of the Feast

- 11:27-34 (VIII. D 1)
- a. UNWORTHY MANNER (VIII. D 2)
 - b. UNWORTHY MEN (VIII. D 3)

CORRECT USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- 12:1- 3 (IX. A 1)
1. One Simple Test 12:2, 3 (IX. A 2)
- a. JESUS IS ACCURSED (IX. A 3)
 - b. JESUS IS LORD (IX. A 4)
2. Many Spiritual Gifts 12:4-11 (IX. A 5)
- a. UNITY OF SOURCE vs. 4- 7 (IX. A 6)
 - b. DIVERSITY OF OPERATIONS vs. 8-10 (IX. A 7)
 - (1) THE WORD OF WISDOM v. 8a (IX. A 8)
 - (2) THE WORD OF KNOWLEDGE v. 8b (IX. A 9)
 - (3) FAITH v. 9a (IX. A 10)
 - (4) GIFTS OF HEALING v. 9b (IX. A 11)
 - (5) WORKING OF MIRACLES v. 10a (IX. A 12)
 - (6) PROPHECY v. 10b (IX. A 13)
 - (7) DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS v. 10c (IX. A 14)
 - (8) TONGUES v. 10d (IX. A 15)
 - (9) INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES v. 10e (IX. A 16)
 - c. SUMMARY v. 11 (IX. A 17)
3. One Church Body 12:12-31 (IX. A 18)
- a. THE ILLUSTRATION vs. 12-26 (IX. A 19)

- (1) "THE BODY IS NOT ONE
MEMBER, BUT MANY" v. 14 (IX. A 20)
- (2) "THEY ARE MANY MEMBERS,
YET BUT ONE BODY" v. 20 (IX. A 21)
- (3) "THEY ARE DIFFERENT, BUT
EACH IS ESSENTIAL" (IX. A 22)
- b. THE APPLICATION vs. 27-30 (IX. A 23)
 - (1) CONCERNING THE MEMBERS v. 27 (IX. A 24)
 - (2) CONCERNING THE MINISTRY
vs. 28-30 (IX. A 25)
- c. THE EXHORTATION v. 31 (IX. A 26)

CONTROLLING POWER OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- 13:1-13 (IX. B 1)
- 1. The Necessity of Love 13:13 (IX. B 2)
 - a. MORE IMPORTANT THAN TONGUES v. 1 (IX. B 3)
 - b. MORE IMPORTANT THAN PROPHECY v. 2a (IX. B 4)
 - c. MORE IMPORTANT THAN MIRACLE-
WORKING FAITH v. 2b (IX. B 5)
 - d. MORE IMPORTANT THAN CHARITY v. 3a (IX. B 6)
 - e. MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE
SUPREME SACRIFICE v. 3b (IX. B 7)
- 2. The Nature of Love 13:4-7 (IX. B 8)
 - a. LOVE IS PATIENT v. 4a (IX. B 9)
 - b. LOVE IS KIND v. 4b (IX. B 10)
 - c. LOVE DOES NOT ENVY v. 4c (IX. B 11)
 - d. LOVE DOES NOT BOAST v. 4d (IX. B 12)
 - e. LOVE IS NOT PROUD v. 4e (IX. B 13)
 - f. LOVE DOES NOT ACT
UNBECOMINGLY v. 5a (IX. B 14)
 - g. LOVE IS NOT SELFISH v. 5b (IX. B 15)
 - h. LOVE IS NOT IRRITATED BY WRONGS v. 5c (IX. B 16)
 - i. LOVE DOES NOT KEEP AN ACCOUNT
OF WRONGS v. 5d (IX. B 17)
 - j. LOVE DOES NOT ENJOY THE
WRONG DOING OF OTHERS v. 6a (IX. A 18)
 - k. LOVE DELIGHTS IN TRUTH v. 6b (IX. B 19)
 - l. LOVE TOLERATES EVERYTHING v. 7a (IX. B 20)
 - m. LOVE IS COMPLETELY TRUSTING v. 7b (IX. B 21)
 - n. LOVE NEVER STOPS HOPING v. 7c (IX. B 22)
 - o. LOVE IS UNWAVERING IN
RESOLUTION v. 7d (IX. B 23)

3. The Permanence of Love	13:8-12 (IX. B 24)
4. The Supremacy of Love	13:13 (IX. B 25)
COMPARATIVE VALUE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS	
	14:1-40
1. A Right Estimate of Gifts	14:1-25 (IX. A 1)
a. THE DISCRIMINATING TEST	14:1-11 (X. A 3)
(1) APPLIED TO FELLOW CHRISTIANS	vs. 2-11,13-17 (X. A 3)
(a) Instructive?	vs. 2-11 (X. A 4)
(b) Thoughtful?	vs. 13-17 (X. A 5)
(2) APPLIED TO NON-CHRISTIANS	vs. 20-25 (X. A 6)
(a) Universal?	vs. 23,24a,b (X. A 7)
(b) Convicting?	vs. 24c, d, 25 (X. A 8)
b. THE CLEAR CONCLUSIONS	14:12,18,19, 24,25 (X. A 9)
(1) APPLIED TO FELLOW CHRISTIANS	vs. 12,18,19 (X. A 10)
(a) Prophecy Edifies the Church	v. 12 (X. A 11)
(b) Prophecy Edifies the Mind	vs. 18,19 (X. A 12)
(2) APPLIED TO NON-CHRISTIANS	vs. 24, 25 (X. A 13)
(a) Prophecy is Universal	vs. 24 (X. A 14)
(b) Prophecy Brings Conviction of Sin.	vs. 24,25 (X. A 15)
(1) Self-revealing	v. 24c (X. A 16)
(2) Self-condemning	v. 24d (X. A 17)
(3) Self-perceptive	v. 25a (X. A 18)
(4) Self-humiliating	v. 25b (X. A 19)
2. A Right Exercise of Gifts	14:26-35 (X. B 1)
a. PUBLIC USE OF THE GIFT OF TONGUES	14:27,28) (X. B 2)
(1) LIMITED TO THREE	v. 27a (X. B 3)
(2) ONE AT A TIME	v. 27b (X. B 4)
(3) ONE INTERPRETER	vs. 27c,28 (X. B 5)
b. PUBLIC USE OF THE GIFT OF PROPHECY	14:29-36 (X. B 6)

- (1) BY MEN vs. 29-33a (X. B 7)
 - (a) Limited to Three v. 29 (X. B 8)
 - (b) One at a Time vs. 30,31 (X. B 9)
 - (c) Under Self-Control vs. 32,33a (X. B 10)
- (2) BY WOMEN vs. 33b-35 (X. B 11)
 - (a) Forbidden? vs. 33b, 34a (X. B 12)
 - (b) Confirmed? vs. 34b,35 (X. B 13)

3. A Right Recognition of Authority 14:39-40 (X. C 1)

4. A Right Recognition of Gifts 14:36-38 (X. D 1)

THE HISTORIC FACT OF BODILY RESURRECTION

15:1-34 (XI. A 1)

1. Proclaimed by the Gospel 15:3-11 (XI. A 2)

- a. CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS. v. 3b (XI. A 3)
- b. CHRIST WAS BURIED. v. 4a (XI. A 4)
- c. CHRIST ROSE FROM THE DEAD. v. 4b (XI. A 5)
- d. CHRIST APPEARED TO HIS DISCIPLES. v. 5-11 (XI. A 6)

- (1) TO CEPHAS v. 5a (XI. A 7)
- (2) TO THE TWELVE v. 5b (XI. A 8)
- (3) TO MORE THAN FIVE HUNDRED v. 6 (XI. A 9)
- (4) TO JAMES v. 7a (XI. A 10)
- (5) TO ALL THE APOSTLES v. 7b (XI. A 11)
- (6) TO THE APOSTLE PAUL vs. 8-11 (XI. A 12)
 - (a) Paul's Witness v. 8 (XI. A 13)
 - (b) Paul's Testimony vs. 9-11 (XI. A 14)

2. Denied by the Ureasonable 15:12-19 (XI. A 15)

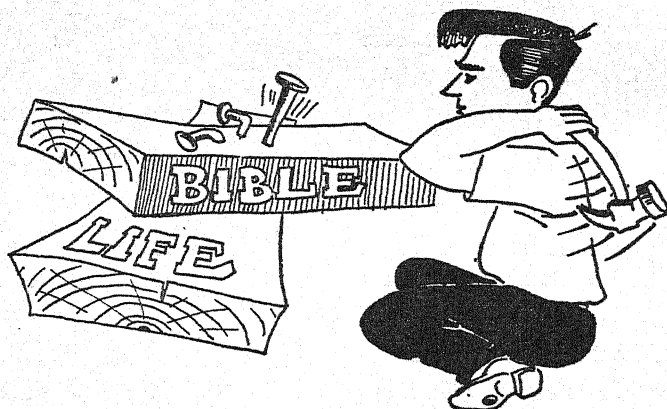
a. THE CONSEQUENCES OF DENIAL

- vs. 13-18 (XI. A 16)
- (1) FIRST SET vs. 13-15 (XI. A 17)
 - (a) Then Christ is Dead. vs. 13b (XI. A 18)
 - (b) Then Gospel Preaching Is Purposeless. v. 14b (XI. A 19)
 - (c) Then Your Personal Faith is Without Foundation. v. 14c (XI. A 20)
 - (d) Then All Christians Are False Witnesses. v. 15 (XI. A 21)

- (e) SECOND SET vs. 16-18 (XI. A 22)
 - (a) Then Christ is Dead. v. 16b (XI. A 23)
 - (b) Then Your Personal Faith is Fruitless. v. 17b (XI. A 24)
 - (c) Then Your Sins are Unforgiven. v. 17c (XI. A 25)
 - (d) Then All the Saints Have Perished. v. 18 (XI. A 26)
- b. THE CONCLUSION ABOUT DENIAL v. 19 (XI. A 27)
- 3. Assured By the Resurrection of Christ** 15:20-28 (XI. A 28)
 - a. THE CONSEQUENCES OF RESURRECTION vs. 20b-27 (XI. A 29)
 - (1) THE RISEN CHRIST BEGINS A NEW PROGRAMME vs. 20b-24 (XI. A 30)
 - (a) First v. 23b (XI. A 31)
 - (b) After ward v. 23c (XI. A 32)
 - (c) Last vs. 24-26 (XI. A 33)
 - (2) THE RISEN CHRIST COMPLETES THE KINGDOM PROGRAMME vs. 28,29 (XI. A 34)
 - b. THE CONSUMMATION OF RESURRECTION v. 28c (XI. A 35)
- 4. Substantiated by the Lives of Christians** 15:29-34 (XI. A 36)
 - a. WHY ARE THEY BAPTISED? v. 29 (XI. A 37)
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Application

In order to understand the message of I Corinthians we have studied the epistle in the light of the times in which it was written and the people to whom it was written. How-

ever, its permanent value lies in its ability to throw light on present-day problems. Although the immediate circumstances about which Paul writes are those of the Corinthian church, yet Paul gives his answer in the form of Christian principles that apply to church problems in all ages. His entire epistle is a message of God to present-day believers. Let us seek to understand what the Holy Spirit is saying through I Corinthians to each one of us today.

GREETINGS

Remember that I Corinthians is addressed to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord" as well as to "the church of God which is at Corinth" (1:2). It is a message addressed to us by "God" through "Paul . . . an apostle of Jesus Christ" (1:1). Therefore, it is an authoritative message to which we should give heed.

THANKSGIVING

Along with the saints at Corinth, we too can be grateful for past, present and future gifts. It might be well to pause at this point and count our blessings. Remember the pit of sin from which you "were called unto the fellowship of His Son" (1:9b). Remember also the promise of God that you will be "blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1:8). Remember that "God is faithful" (1:9a). Remembering, you will be thankful.

PARTY STRIFE

Paul asks this searching question: "Is Christ divided?" In all honesty we must acknowledge the differences that do divide those who believe in Christ, and in all seriousness we must seek the unity of the Spirit. It was carnality that divided the Corinthians. Is it not likely that our present-day divisions come from the same source?

Today, many Christians are concentrating their attention on the removal of denominational divisions. God's message to us through the Apostle Paul concentrates on removing the party-divisions within the local congregation that first destroy our fellowship and then our witness. It is relatively easy to organise *denominational* unity; true *spiritual* unity cannot be achieved except as the Spirit of God continues to work in the life of each member of the local church. Let us seek spiritual unity, and let us seek it through the

Spirit of God. It is useless to seek any spiritual gifts, let alone a spiritual ministry, until we are in fellowship with Christ and with every member of His body, the church. (cf. Mt. 5:23,24)

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE

Discipline is one of the crying needs within the church, as well as throughout all society, today. Just as Paul reminded the Corinthians of what Christ had done for them, we need to remember that we have been saved from sin and received into fellowship with God Himself. Even though we continue to live in a sinful world, we can live changed lives. We should banish, from our lives and from our churches, everything that is contrary to the message and spirit of Christ. The worst fate that can befall any man is to be separated from God. If we are convinced of this fact, we will separate ourselves from those practices and from those people who separate us from God. In the church, we will make discipline a means of salvation to those members who oppose themselves. Likewise, we will suffer personal loss rather than seek to gain justice from a fellow Christian in a civil court of law. This is not a matter of choice, but one of Christian duty. Do we measure up to God's standard? Does our local church seek to settle disputes between its members?

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Salvation affects behaviour: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new (II Cor. 5:17). When Christ gave you the gift of eternal life, He did more than save your soul from hell (cf. C. F. LESSON TWO). Christ saved all there is of you and began preparing you for service here on earth and in the ages to come. He made you a part of *the body of Christ*, and He expects you to act like it. When you go out for a good time and compromise Christian principles, your actions reflect on your Master.

In discussing the Christian's relationships with the opposite sex, Paul goes even further; he says that your body is the Lord's. Your body is the Lord's because the Holy Spirit dwells within you. For this reason we must respect our bodies as we would a temple dedicated to God. When you

enter a house of God, you take off your hat or remove your shoes. Why? To show respect to God. But your whole being is dedicated to God; the Holy Spirit dwells in you. Do you respect your body as much as the church building where you worship? If you do, you will follow Paul's teaching concerning marriage and related problems, even in an age of sexual permissiveness.

It is significant that Paul deals with the most personal problems of the Christian in the context of the urgency of the times and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The most decisive crisis of human history has taken place already: Christ has paid the debt of every man's sin at Calvary and has risen in triumph over the last enemy, death. The next event for history's page is His return for His saints. Paul lived under the urgency of this fact that He Who has come, may come back again at any moment. Paul decided every problem in the light of Christ's Second Coming. Does this coming event drive you to prompt obedience ?

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

The Corinthian Christians were concerned whether they could use things that had been used in the rites and ceremonies of other faiths. Their problem was one of indigenisation; therefore, Paul's answers apply to our own problems of Indianisation. As we seek to make the church of India a significant and influential part of our own community, we should be guided by the principles Paul gives us here. His basic liberating principle is this: Mere contact with non-Christian worship does not defile, for our God is the Lord of all. Yet, Paul points out two limitations that must always be borne in mind: 1) Will this object or practice lead any Christian brother into temptation or sin? 2) Does it compromise my loyalty to the One True God? These Christian principles, and others Paul lays down here, have almost daily application to our personal lives and our church problems. Paul further directs that all the principles must be applied in love and with concern for the welfare of others.

CHURCH DISORDERS

Paul deals with several problems connected with the worship service, but the foremost of these is proper participa-

tion in the Lord's Supper. Christ's instituting of this ordinance is all of grace; it is His free gift to the believer. The believer has nothing to do but to accept God's gift. Therefore, the believer is under obligation to receive it in the spirit and manner in which Christ offers it—as a memorial of His death and resurrection and as a reminder of His promise to return. To receive it in any other manner, or for any other purpose, is to profane it. And to profane it is to come under the judgement of God. Moreover, the Lord's Supper involves a horizontal relationship as well as a vertical relationship. It signifies that those who partake of the Lord's Supper belong to the same family—the family of God. It testifies to our love for believers as well as our love for God. Do we not profane the Holy Communion when we contradict this testimony of the Lord's Supper by our lack of love and by the divisions which that lack has made among us?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Every Christian has received the Spirit of God and should seek to remove from his life all those habits and attitudes that hinder His working. Then, the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with love for Christ and will lead us to understand God's will. He will also unite us in the body of Christ and give us one of the many grace-gifts by which the church fulfils God's purpose in this world. These gifts vary greatly, but the insignificant or unusual ones must not be despised. Yet, every Christian should seek a part in that activity of the Holy Spirit through which an intelligent presentation of the Gospel is made to unbelievers. This cannot be a matter of the feelings only; it must utilise all our mental powers. The Holy Spirit must be the leader of our worship and of our witness, so that the true nature of God will be displayed through the orderliness and the spirituality of our meetings. Do our local church services measure up to these ideals?

THE RESURRECTION

Do you have an insurance policy? What plans do you have for the future? What assurance do you have that you will be able to follow out those plans? Have you really thought about these matters, or have you just taken life for

granted? Have you ever noticed the large number of short graves—graves of those who died in their youth—that are a part of every cemetery? Actually, we have no assurance that we will be alive tomorrow, but we do have God's promise for the future.

The believer has the best insurance in the world—the knowledge that Christ has risen from the dead and the promise that we shall be like Him. Whether or not he has fire insurance, theft insurance or life insurance, every Christian has heavenly insurance. What God has promised, He will perform. Trust Him, and read your insurance policy (I Cor. 15) whenever you need assurance.

These few applications of the truths of I Corinthians have been given to get you started in making your own applications. Let us pray that God will help us to realise both our privileges and our responsibilities in Christ Jesus our Lord.





Further Study

For your further study of I Corinthians we list seven commentaries that are conservative in character and available in India at the time of this printing:

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|----------------------|--|
| De Haan, M. R., | <i>First Corinthians</i> , Zondervan
192 pp. boards, Rs. 22. 50 |
| Grosheide, F. F., | <i>First Corinthians</i> , Marshall,
Morgan and Scott, 416 pp. boards,
Rs. 40.50 |
| Hodge, Charles, | <i>First Corinthians</i> , Banner of Truth
400 pp. boards, Rs. 13.50 |
| Martin, R. P., | <i>I Corinthians to Galatians</i> , Scrip-
ture Union, 1968, 126 pp. paper,
Rs. 4. 50 |
| Morgan, G. Campbell, | <i>The Corinthian Letters of Paul</i> ,
Oliphants, 180 pp. boards,
Rs. 15. 75 |
| Morris, Leon, | <i>First Corinthians</i> , I.V.F., 250 pp.
paper, Rs. 11. 25 |
| Vine, W.E. | <i>I Corinthians, Local Church Prob-
lems</i> , Oliphants, 1965, 240 pp.
boards, Rs. 14. 20 |

EXAMINATION

I Corinthians Lesson Thirteen

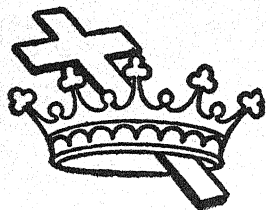
From the forty review questions below, you may select any twenty-five questions for answering in this examination. Write the number of the question at the left hand margin of your examination paper, not the consecutive number. Then answer the question as fully as possible quoting Scripture and giving illustrations. Four marks will be given for each question answered correctly and adequately.

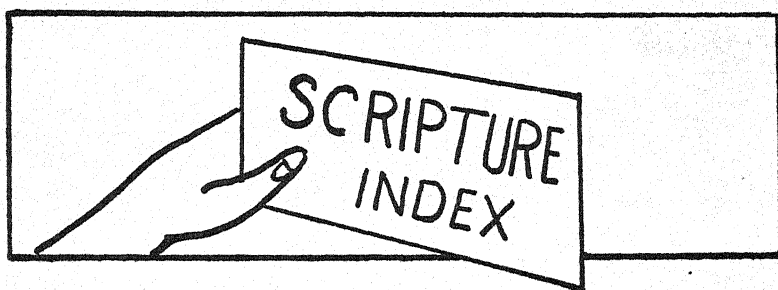
1. In IC 7 you were told to list in your notebook all references and allusions you could find in I Corinthians to immorality at Corinth. Copy out the observations you have made.
2. Which of the twelve lessons of this course of study made the greatest impression upon you? Why?
3. Harmonise Paul's directions about excommunication and his insistence that all we do should be done in love. What is the final aim of church discipline?
4. To whom is I Corinthians addressed? Is this epistle of value in solving present-day church problems?
5. Paul divides mankind into three kinds of people. List these as headings and write the characteristics of each under its own heading.
6. On what basis does God judge the good works of Christians? If you intend to put one rupee into the offering, but actually drop a five rupee note into the offering by mistake, will God credit you with one rupee or five? Why?
7. The Corinthians had to learn the secret of pleasing God. What did Paul tell them about this? What principles are involved?
8. We live according to what we expect of ourselves. Show how Paul raised the expectations of the Corinthians. Include the matters he referred to by his many-times-repeated question: "Know ye not?"
9. Using the principles Paul sets down in his discussion of Christian liberty, write a short article on the subject: **THE INDIANISATION OF THE CHURCH.**
10. How can any believer be certain that he will be with Christ throughout eternity?

11. Explain the meaning and significance of the Lord's Supper. How were the Corinthians making "a convenience of the church" (lit. trans.)? Do you know of any Christians who are doing the same thing today?
12. Describe the city of Corinth at the time of Paul's first visit.
13. What is a mature Christian? Would you describe yourself as a mature Christian? If not, what do you think you need to do in order to become a mature Christian?
14. How did worship in the church at Corinth differ from our worship services today?
15. Is it proper to desire to speak in tongues? When? Where?
16. Why is love all-important both in the individual Christian's life and in the life of the church?
17. Paul uses the figure of the human body to illustrate the unity and diversity of the church. Explain all that he seeks to teach by this illustration.
18. Summarise the teaching of I Corinthians on the subjects of a) the Christian's relationships with other Christians; b) the Christian's relationships with non-Christians; c) the Christian's relationship with God.
19.
 - a. Fully describe what the believer's resurrection body will be like.
 - b. List the four adjectives Paul uses to describe the spiritual body and contrast them with the four adjectives he uses to describe the natural body.
20. What practical effects should belief in the resurrection produce in our everyday lives?
21.
 - a. Explain the sequence of the resurrection.
 - b. What will take place when the Lord Jesus Christ comes back again?
22. Explain how each part of the church service helps us to worship God. Can you help to make the service more worshipful? How?
23. What is Christian liberty? Does it have any restrictions? If so, list them. Give illustrations of the ways in which the Corinthians used their Christian liberty unwisely.

24. a. Why were the Corinthians still feeding on "spiritual milk" when they were old enough to partake of "spiritual meat"?
- b. How can you please God? Answer from I Corinthians.
25. What does Paul mean when he says: "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit"? Explain this as you would to a young Christian who had just completed standard ten and was about to begin standard eleven.
26. Answer the man who says: "I am not hurting anyone but myself. What I do is my own business, isn't it?"
27. a. What does it mean to "marry in the Lord"?
- b. Is God really concerned about whom you marry? If He is concerned, can you be sure you are marrying the one God has chosen for you?
28. By what standards do you judge activities which some Christians consider questionable?
29. a. List the reasons Paul gives for supporting the ministers who serve us.
- b. Describe Paul's example of self-sacrificial service. What was his reward for this service?
30. Fully describe Paul's evangelistic methods from statements made in this epistle.
31. Sum up Paul's teaching on the subject of marriage.
32. The fullest description of "speaking with tongues" is found in I Corinthians 14. Expound this chapter.
33. Describe the *Eucharist* and the *Agape*. Tell how they were related.
34. What authority does this epistle have for us today?
35. a. Is the church a national or a supra-national organization?
- b. Relate your answer to conditions and circumstances in your own country.
- c. Why does Paul send greetings in all his letters?
36. What are the major divisions of I Corinthians? Expound the contents of either the first or the last division.
37. What can we learn in this epistle about the common affairs of our everyday lives, such as, planning our work, travel arrangements, relationships with co-workers and fellow-believers?

38. What is Paul's attitude toward women? Outline his teaching about the sphere of Christian women as presented in this epistle.
39. Explain Paul's concept of time: the old age, the new age and the overlapping of the two. How did this concept affect his own life and his advice to others?
40. I Corinthians does *not* deal with the subject of church union. It does deal with the subject of spiritual unity. From Paul's discussion of the cure for party strife, deduce a set of Biblical principles to guide you in your own efforts to resolve divisions within the church.





All Scripture references, other than those to I Corinthians, mentioned in Lessons One through Twelve of this text, are listed in Biblical order below. Each Bible reference is followed by the section number or numbers where it appears. The section number is made up of three or four parts: The Roman numeral indicates the lesson; the capital letter indicates the principal division within the lesson; the Arabic numeral indicates the sub-division; and, if a small letter or a number in brackets is included, it indicates the part of the sub-division in which the reference is located. Through this index, every Bible reference in this course, that is connected with I Corinthians, can be located. Learn the value of these index pages by using them frequently.

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Corinth was one of the cities of ancient Greece as well as a city of the first century of the Christian era. This map shows the relation of Corinth to prominent places and events in the history of Greece during its classical period.



All the principal subjects you have studied in the first twelve lessons of this course are listed in alphabetical order below. Opposite each subject are one or more section numbers where instruction regarding that subject will be found. The Roman numeral indicates the lesson; the capital letter indicates the division of lesson; the Arabic number and all that may follow indicates the section or subsection of that division of the lesson. By reading all the listings under any subject, you can correlate the teaching of this text on that subject. If the subject you are interested in is not listed in this index check to see if one of its synonyms is listed. For example, you will not find the name "Jesus" listed in this index, but you will find the title "Christ," with many sub-titles listed under it.

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